
EMERGENT

Arnosky, Jim

Armadillo's Orange

ISBN 0399234128

As Armadillo makes his daily trek to search for grubs to feed his rumbling tummy, he passes his neighbours without a second glance. He is solitary and seems happy to be. He always finds his way home by looking for the large orange that lies at the entrance to his burrow. Imagine his consternation when a wily wind blows the orange away and he is no longer sure of his destination. Neighbours to the rescue...and Armadillo learns a valuable lesson.

Blair, Margot

The Red String

ISBN 0892363401

An open drawer is where this bit of red string begins its journey. We follow it as it makes its way around the world, showing us what fun can be had when you let your imagination soar. Beginning as a jumprope, it transforms itself into a clothesline, a highway, and more. When the journey is done, it returns full circle to its starting point...the open drawer. No words are needed to tell its story, but many will be spoken as young children share its trek.

Boynton, Sandra

Barnyard Dance

ISBN 1563054426

Do you like to dance? Your toes will be tapping when you share this book...over and over and over again. It is filled with wacky farm animals and their wily ways. You cannot help but get caught up in the rhyme and rhythm that is so evident in Boynton's writing. She sure knows how to capture an audience and soon the children will be spouting the endearing text without help or prompts. The benefits of such books are long lasting as children come to grips with the concept of rhyme and soon use it when they begin their journey toward independent reading.

Brown, Ruth

Ten Seeds

ISBN 0375806970

This might seem like a simple counting book at first glance, but it is much more than that! When ten sunflower seeds are planted, eager readers expect to watch them sprout and thrive. Not so simple...since the seeds are haphazardly destroyed by an array of events. A slug, a cat, a pigeon, a ball...each plays a part in the destruction of one seed after another. When only one survives, we discover that that is the number needed to ensure the growth of yet another plant and the cycle continues. Perfect illustrations bring clarity and understanding for young readers.

Carter, David

Peekaboo Bugs

ISBN 0689850352

David Carter has created some wonderfully madcap books in his *Bugs in a Box* series. In this one he covers each page with interesting and imaginative bugs hidden under colourful flaps...five at a time. The guessing begins and is tested; and then the reader can turn a wheel and move the creatures, assuring that the fun is about to begin all over again. Don't just look at this book from the series; there are a number of others that are equally charming and interactive. The print is bold, the words familiar, and the fun infectious.

Catalanotto, Peter**Kitten Red Yellow Blue**

ISBN 0689865267

We have met Mrs. Tuttle before (*Matthew ABC* and *Daisy 1,2,3*). Her stories lead children to an awareness of new concepts. This time she combines colour and community. When Sophia has a litter of sixteen calico kittens, it is community workers who help Mrs. Tuttle out of her predicament. Each selects a kitten, then dresses it to match their particular job in the neighbourhood. The kittens seem secure and happy in their new homes; and in the end, Mrs. Tuttle is able to arrange a reunion with the mother cat to prove that all is well. The author, who is also the artist, chooses to use a predominantly grey palette making the featured colour stand strong and clear for his young audience.

🍁 Denton, K

A Child's Treasury of Nursery Rhymes

ISBN 1553379802

This has long been a favourite book to give to new parents. It is filled with rhymes, familiar and not so, and Kady's inspiring watercolours. She brings such great joy to the characters that she creates to people the pages. As they read, parents will return to happy memories of their own childhood when nursery rhymes were the staple at bedtime. Children need to hear rhyme from a very early age to help them when they begin their journey to reading independence. They learn these rhymes easily when they are read repeatedly and they love to pore over the whimsical pages as they reread their favourites.

🍁 Dodds, Dayle Ann

Where's Pup?

ISBN 0887766226

The non-stop activity of the circus and its performers is evident as a small clown searches high and low for Pup. The grandeur and ceremony is captured in the use of rich colour and an energetic final page that is quite remarkable. Each new performer encountered has no recollection of seeing Pup, but they prolong the search with rhyming replies that send the searcher along the path to his ultimate discovery.

Dunrea, Olivier

BooBoo

ISBN 0618356541

BooBoo is a refreshing addition to Dunrea's gaggle of tiny goslings. You might remember Gertie & Gossie and even Ollie. BooBoo is a lovely shade of blue and her special curiosity is food...any food belonging to anybody. Each new taste elicits the same response... 'good food'. There is nothing that she doesn't find tasty and delicious until she meets with a soap bubble. The results are engaging. Children will be shouting out warnings as she reaches toward a beehive as her final temptation. Short sentences, repetitive text, and an evident rhythm make BooBoo a perfect choice for this age group.

Ehlert, Lois

Snowballs

ISBN 0152020950

If ever you want to foster creativity in the outdoors, here's the recipe! Take fresh-fallen snow, a bag of 'great stuff', a spirited artist, her vivid imagination, and her love of bold colour. This book will be the inspiration for a day filled with creating imaginary snow creatures (a family, at the very least) whose many attributes come from the bag filled with found objects.

You might do it outside on a relatively warm day, or inside with bright construction paper and lots of space for building.

Emberley, Ed**Go Away, Big Green Monster**

ISBN 0316236535

‘Again!’ and ‘Again!’ and ‘Again!’...the refrain does not change no matter how many times you read this book! It is so much fun to create and then destroy a monster in a matter of moments. Ed Emberley inspires with his colourful, cutout character that builds with simple language and then diminishes as we say goodbye to each nasty piece of the puzzle. This will not be an ‘old’ favourite for your classroom; it will be an ‘always’ favourite. This is a book that makes young children want to learn to read and they will soon be reading it to each other and to anyone who happens to pay a visit.

Felix, Monique

Tuba Lessons

ISBN 0898125227

What wit this tale of a traveling boy exhibits! The almost wordless story begins and ends with admonishments; the rest is left for beguiled readers to follow the action, without the need for text. The road seems deviously like a musical staff and the lines are there to lead the young musician down various paths, while enticing the forest animals to join his journey. Who wouldn’t want to dawdle in celebration of such spontaneity?

Fleming, Denise

Mama Cat Has Three Kittens

ISBN 0805071628

Who marches to the beat of a different drummer in your family? In the case of Mama Cat’s litter, it’s Boris. Boris naps while Mama teaches his straight-laced siblings the tricks of the feline trade. While Mama and his siblings sleep, Boris is ready to spring into action. Then, Boris pounces! The artwork is a visual feast, and the tiny trios of additional characters who are hidden in the pages will gain the rapt attention of even the youngest listener. Don’t miss Mama Mouse and her babies!

Fleming, Denise

Time to Sleep

ISBN 0805067671

Bear can tell that winter is on its way by the frost in the air. Before settling in, as is the case with the many who will love hearing this story at bedtime, there is just one ‘more’ thing that he must do. He must tell his friend Snail. As we watch his astute assurance pass to each of his forest friends, we are also privy to the natural changes that are taking place around them. The surprise ending adds just the right touch to beg the question, “Can we read it again?”

Fox, Mem

Tough Boris

ISBN 0152896120

Mem Fox has been, for many, a wonderful focus for author study. She has such a passion for children and their reading and will do countless rewrites to craft a perfect readaloud. Boris is a tough, greedy, massive, scary pirate; all of those traits evident in the watercolour art that accompanies the text. But, he also has a heart and we are lucky enough to experience it. In a parallel wordless story, we meet the young boy who shares the swashbuckling, adventurous brigand’s sorrow.

Frazee, Marla

Hush Little Baby

ISBN 0152014292

Songbooks hold a special place in the hearts of many. They can be the first books that make children think of themselves as quite brilliant 'readers'. They learn the words easily and will return to the book repeatedly to share it with anyone who wants to admire this new skill. Marla Frazee creates a family whose love and concern for their baby is evident as they seek help from a tinker man to find that which will attract his attention and cease the cacophony of screeching that permeates their space. At long last, peace comes to all and the song comes to an end.

Guarino, Deborah

Is Your Mama a Llama?

ISBN 0439598427

When children hear books that incorporate rhythmic text and rhyming words, they develop a growing awareness for the written word and the stories told. Recognizing and reproducing rhyme enhances their early reading ability. This book provides loveable characters, gentle humour and a guessing game that intrigues and delights. Once heard, emergent readers will independently share it with all who will listen.

Henkes, Kevin

Kitten's First Full Moon

ISBN 0060588284

In this Caldecott Medal winner, Kevin Henkes turns to a totally different artistic style, using black and white lines and shades of grey, to tell this deceptively simple story of a kitten learning about the world. Imagine her surprise when she sees a bowl of milk in the sky and is not able to taste it. She tries and fails, then tries again. But, nothing she does brings her closer to her target. Finally, wet, hungry and tired, she heads for home where she is greeted with a most welcome surprise!

Hoban, Tana

So Many Circles, So Many Squares

ISBN 0688151655

This title, only one of the many remarkable books by this perceptive artist and photographer, may encourage readers to come to know and appreciate her body of work. Her conceptualization of the many seemingly mundane discoveries in a young child's life deservedly holds a place of honour on the reading shelves of young children. She brings SO MANY concepts to brilliant and clear light. Please don't stop at this book – use it as a springboard to the life and legacy of Tana Hoban, teacher extraordinaire.

Hutchins, Pat

Changes, Changes

ISBN 0689711379

It begins with a set of blocks. Add a soaring imagination, an artist's creative spirit and, once purchased, you have the chance to share this tiny treasure with any eager child. A house catches fire and becomes a fire engine; the fire engine pours so much water on the fire that a boat is needed. All can be created with a few skillful changes. The stories can be told in new and varying ways for hours. As with all fine wordless books, the illustrations tell a tale that begs discussion, invites comparisons and shared memories, and guides its readers to the joy a book without words can bring.

 Lesynski, Loris**Zig Zag: Zoems for Zindergarten**

ISBN 1550378821

Poet Loris Lesynski works hard at her craft to deliver just the right words with a heaping helping of zaniness that is so appropriate for this group of readers. She fills the pages with her cartoon-like characters and dramatically uses the white space to give readers lots to discuss while they share her zippy 'zoems'. The poems begin where the day begins, at the door of the kindergarten classroom. With each new verse she invites us into the inner sanctum of kindergarten 'kapers' from the beginning of the day until the door closes on the last to depart. If you are looking for new and original rhymes to have your kids rocking, you would not go wrong with this book.

 MacLeod, Liz**I Heard a Little Baa**

ISBN 1550744968

Similar in scope to Guarino's *Is Your Mama A Llama?* this infectious little book is a fold-out reading game. It's great fun for everyone, and soon children will be sharing its text with a doll, a partner, a grandma, or even on their own. Rhyme is evident, clues are provided, and guessing is allowed...often without reservation or self-control for the intensity of the response. Perfectly sized for little hands, it will be read and loved until it falls apart. You might even have the desire to trash it yourself after being called upon time and time again to LISTEN!

Martin, Bill Jr.

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

ISBN 068983568X

Imagine a kindergarten child sitting with a tape of Bill Martin's raucous romp through the alphabet...ponytail swinging, caught up in the pure delight of the words and their rhythm. As she turns the pages, she sings the song at the top of her voice and can do nothing but stop and listen. She would certainly share her special book with all who would take the time to hear her 'read' it. This text's long life on a myriad of bookshelves is testament to its endless charm.

McCully, Emily

Four Hungry Kittens

ISBN 0803725051

'When the cat's away, the kittens will play' is a new adage to describe the action in this fast-paced adventure. The fact that there are no words to tell the story does not reduce the suspense. There is nothing that cannot be seen in the expressions of these well-developed characters. Mama has gone searching for food and becomes trapped in a barn and the kittens seize the opportunity to do some exploring without recognizing the inherent dangers. Leave it to a capable and concerned canine to keep them from evident danger, and to ensure that they are reunited with their concerned mother.

 Milich, Zoran**City 123**

ISBN 1553375408

A stunning counting book offers the young child a chance to practise this new concept, while looking closely at the urban environment in which the items are found. This is the fourth in a series (*City ABC*, *City Signs*, *City Colours*) and shows a notable evolution in design and perception. Familiar objects and bright colours add to its appeal for all readers and provide a model for young writers who want to try something new when presenting information to an audience. Now, you can sit back and listen to the counting!

Miller, Margaret**Big and Little**

ISBN 0688147488

Minimal in text, but long on colour and interest, this book treats readers to a photographic journey in size and opposites. Familiar objects and spare rhythmic wording are sure to appeal to this audience. The author keeps the format clear and comfortable as she explores the difference between big and little. Be it people, animals, toys, fruit, or body parts, Miller's commendable photography creates a useful and exemplary look at what can be done when you combine words with perfect pictures.

Miller, Margaret

Guess Who?

ISBN 0688127835

Lucky we are that children just learning to read love books that require thought and visual acuity. In this book, noted photographer Margaret Miller provides endless joy for her young admirers. Each time the question is asked, photos are presented and a list of ridiculous possibilities suggested. Kids will get their giggle fix as they peruse the clear and well-designed pictures, while trying to offer an accurate response.

🍁 Munsch, Robert

Mud Puddle

ISBN 1550374680

The errant and exasperating mud puddle described here causes untold difficulties for Jule Ann. No matter the time of day or the circumstance, she cannot seem to avoid confrontation. She tries to prepare herself and to dodge its antics, but the mud puddle just appears and attacks. She is defenseless. When she finally faces her nemesis, Jule Ann triumphs. We are left to applaud her ingenuity and persistence. You go, girl!

🍁 Pearson, Debora

Leo's Tree

ISBN 1550378457

To plant a tree to honour the birth of a child or the death of a loved one seems such an endearing and truly worthy tradition. To write a story in rhythmic text, with grace and love, which will bear many readings is a commendable task. As Leo grows, so grows the linden tree that is planted at his birth. They experience life together through continuous seasons and then take great joy in the addition of a partner tree when Leo's baby sister, Sophie, is born.

🍁 Raffi

Spider on the Floor

ISBN 0375822208

While loving Charlotte may give one pause when considering the fate of a wayward spider, one's initial reaction would be to STOMP. Thus, in one's mind, a spider on the floor is just where it should be...not on one's toe, one's leg, one's stomach or anywhere else. Kids, however, delight in singing this song about a witty spider that uses a child as a ladder to get to the top. Using songbooks as a starting place for successful early reading makes good sense. This is just one of a series made popular by this well-loved children's entertainer.

Raschka, Chris

Yo! Yes!

ISBN 0531071081

Only 34 words and a friendship launches. When two young boys...polar opposites of each other...meet on the street, there is little to convince the reader that they could become friends. One is unassuming; the other is brash. One is black, the other white. One is wise to the ways of the street, the other naïve and inexperienced. Their feelings are worn on their sleeves and there is little to lead us to believe that they can overcome their differences, also evident. Will they take a chance on friendship? Why not?

Rathmann, Peggy

Good Night, Gorilla

ISBN 0698116496

Who could resist reading this bedtime story repeatedly? When the zookeeper begins his routine of assuring that his charges are comfortable for the night, he is unaware that a scheming simian is right behind him releasing said animals from their cages. As he strolls toward hearth and home, we watch the liberated zoo populace accompany him. Turning out the light and whispering good night to his wife, she is startled by the cacophony of good nights that follow his. She returns the animals to the zoo, inadvertently letting the tiny gorilla follow her right back home where he tucks himself in for a good night's sleep. Bravo!

Rathmann, Peggy

The Day the Babies Crawled Away

ISBN 0399231196X

A story within a story, children will love following the adventure of an intrepid batch of babies who seem less than enthralled by the perceived fun of a county fair. While the townspeople partake of the joy inherent in the annual celebration, the babies set off for greener pastures. Luckily, one young boy is vigilant and notices the antics of these juvenile citizens. He follows them and eventually convinces them to return to the fold. The silhouette illustrations provide a perfect backdrop for all the action.

 Reid, Barbara**Read Me a Book**

ISBN 0439957265

The images that Barbara Reid creates for this simple and elegant book are her trademark...expressive, detailed renderings of the joy that families share when they read with each other at any time of the day or night. She gently reminds us that kids need to hear a multitude of wonderful stories if they are to discover the joy inherent in reading and to become readers for their lifetime. The simple text will encourage kids to be soon reading it back to their parents and caregivers.

Seeger, Laura

Lemons Are Not Red

ISBN 1596430087

This is both a book about colour and a gentle bedtime story to be shared in close proximity to the listener. While we learn that lemons are not red, even though the cutout appears to discount that observation, we go on to discover that a lemon is yellow and an apple is red. As she introduces more objects and colours and what they decidedly are not, Seeger balances her text with what they are. Using surprise pairings, she makes the guessing game fun through to the end. Kids will be begging for more and might be encouraged to try some of their own original pairs, teamed with common or not so common colours.

Shannon, David**No, David!**

ISBN 0590930028

Who has not been admonished by an irritated mother for small indiscretions? When you know the rules, should you break them? If you are a young, determined, independent and feisty child, as David Shannon once was, you will relate to the hero in this hilarious glimpse at the life of one hectic household. The words are few; the reactions are indicative of the level of mischief accomplished here...and the frustration felt by all beleaguered parents at one time or another. Go to it, David!

Sis, Peter

Trucks, Trucks, Trucks

ISBN 0688162762

That Peter Sis knows young boys love trucks is evident when we catch our first glimpse of Matt's room, filled with trucks and pictures of trucks. As he heeds his mother's request to put the trucks away, Matt lets his imagination soar. Each truck brings new adventure. The text runs uphill at the right side of each double page spread, giving us a clear picture of the possibilities when trucks are part of your dream world. In a superb gatefold, a huge crane deposits Matt's sock in its assigned place and the task is complete. A clean room means a chance to move outside where trucks are part of the neighbourhood scene.

Steig, William

Pete's a Pizza

ISBN 0062051571

Kids love games that can be played again and again...*Peek-a-Boo, Pat-a-Cake, Red Rover*. On a rainy day when plans to be outside with friends are curtailed, along comes Pete's father to fashion a delectable pizza with his son as the tasty, tempting crust and numerous available toys and trinkets as toppings. Pete's happiness is evident in each detailed picture. Once read, this book will be chanted by one child to another, child to parent and on, and on. So simple in design and seamless in its presentation, Steig creates the perfect pizza party.

 Stinson, Kathy**Red is Best**

ISBN 092023626X

In this quietly affirmative book, red replaces the beloved blanket as an all-time favourite. Mom may not understand its importance for her daughter; only red stockings will do even when they don't match the outfit she is wearing. Only red mittens with holes keep hands warm on the coldest day of winter. Red has to be the colour of choice when adding to the allure of a spiffy outfit. Other colours might be more appropriate, but will they put singing in Kelly's head? Probably not.

Taback, Simms

There was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly

ISBN 0670869392

Kids who can't read the simplest word will soon be singing and sharing this irreverent and highly ridiculous story of a woman who can swallow any manner of beast until she meets and eats the horse. Whoa! That brings an untimely end. Simms Taback fills the white space of each double page spread with detailed, captioned illustrations in an intense, multi-coloured palette. There is much to pore over and humour at every turn. Get your vocal cords limbered up, as the fun may never end.

🍁 Thompson, Richard **We'll All Go Flying** ISBN 1550417002

This text is, for many, a favourite of three fabulous concept books written by Richard Thompson and his wife, Maggee Spicer. Look for *We'll All Go Sailing* and *We'll All Go Exploring* to add to your classroom collection. This counting adventure releases our three fearless explorers to the sky in a bright red hot air balloon. As they soar, they also note shape, colour, habitat and sound. The ever-changing sky as backdrop for this escapade adds to its appeal to the senses. There is a promise as the story ends that this will not be the last voyage the three intrepid travelers share, and it is not.

🍁 Thornhill, Jan **Over in the Meadow** ISBN 1897066082

An old favourite made new again with illustrations awash with everyday objects, this book will be chanted and pored over by readers of all ages. Thornhill has created a feast for the eyes with her broccoli forest, her pretzel beaver dam and the many sets of animals that inhabit this magical meadow. Kids get practice at counting, rhyme, and the many delights of nature as they share this book with equally enthralled adults. To add punch, there is an index at the end that shows the collection of objects used to create this marvelous environment.

🍁 Thornhill, Jan **Wildlife ABC and 123** ISBN 1897066090

Unlike what is considered usual in counting and alphabet fare, this compilation of two previous books by noted Canadian illustrator, Jan Thornhill, has been reissued. As you would expect, there is much to see on the pages created to help garner an interest in young readers for letter and number. She has done an outstanding job of presenting numbers from 1 to 1000, while ensuring detailed work and important appeal. This book should be on the library shelf of every Canadian Early Years classroom...there is so much to see and appreciate.

Turkle, Brinton **Deep in the Forest** ISBN 0140547452

Not all fractured fairy tales have words as this brilliant little story proves. It has had a print life of more than twenty years and it is as appealing today as it was when it was first published. The fact that it is wordless makes it perfect for retelling while children are learning about setting, plot and characters. A tiny bear cub wreaks havoc when he invades the cabin of a young girl and her pioneer family as they take a walk in the forest. It is Goldilocks in reverse and readers will enjoy the gentle humour and warmth of it.

🍁 Watt, Melanie **Leon the Chameleon** ISBN 1553375270

Most chameleons have a special gift...their ability to change colour and become part of their surroundings. Not Leon! Leon has a big problem and it literally sets him apart from all of his friends. He wants to be like them; but, instead of blending with his environs, Leon stands out. Why? Well, Leon becomes the opposite colour, no matter where he is. Instead of green, he is red. Instead of blue, he is yellow. Instead, of purple, he is orange. Leon's special ability finally makes him a hero when the other chameleons become lost. A lesson in the colour wheel, as well as being proud of who we are, this little book will soon become a favourite.

Willems, Mo

Knuffle Bunny

ISBN 0786818700

When Trixie and her Dad set off through their Brooklyn neighbourhood to help with the laundry, they have no idea how traumatic the trip might become. Trixie is accompanied by her faithful and much loved Knuffle Bunny. All is well. On their way home Trixie makes a frightening discovery and, in her best toddler talk, tries to explain it to her father. He does not understand the dilemma and each is distraught by the other's response. Once home it is Mom to the rescue and Trixie, upon seeing her beloved toy again, utters her first words. Perfect for storytime and a visual pleasure.

Willems, Mo

The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog

ISBN 0786818697

With text that can be read, understood, and appreciated by our youngest readers and an idea that will have adult audiences laughing uproariously and wanting to hear it again, Mo Willems proves that *The Pigeon Drives the Bus* was not a fluke. He has created a character whose every movement belies his attitude and feelings toward the events described. Why should the pigeon not eat the hot dog? He found it...but what about the poor, little, defenseless, guileless duck who has never tasted one?

🍁 Williams, Felicity

Pocketful of Stars

ISBN 1550373862

Here's a great gift for the first-time parent. The pages are filled with poems and chants that children will love and parents will share with gusto. Accompanying each is a set of instructions that help make the sharing interactive. We know that the more we present rhyme to young children, the more they are able to reproduce it. They will soon be repeating the chants presented here and their internal collection of verse will grow by leaps and bounds.

Williams, Sue

I Went Walking

ISBN 0152007717

Repetition, rhyme, the love of animals, and a guessing game of sorts, this is a highly acclaimed successor to Bill Martin's *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. When a little boy goes walking, he begins to accumulate a colourful menagerie of farm animals in his parade. Young readers will not tire of the repetitive nature of the text as they experience success in mastering it and joy in the vibrant watercolours. The final spread invites charmed readers to join in the chaos.

Wilson, April

Magpie Magic

ISBN 0803723547

The hands of a young and gifted artist give shape and life to a magpie, which offers a chance for magic and mayhem. As the child continues drawing, the objects gain dimension and the magpie devours, breaks and steals anything his inquisitive nature desires. When it becomes dangerous, the artist tries to gain control and fails miserably. As expected, the bird has the last laugh. The only words name the colours used in this inventive and brilliant caper. Well done!

BEGINNING

Bang, Molly

When Sophie Gets Angry

ISBN 0590189794

Oooh! Sophie is so angry at having to share her toys that she turns into a raging volcano. She bursts out the door and runs until she cannot run another step. Then, she cries. In her own inimitable way Sophie shows us a very effective way to deal with anger that is uncontrolled. After the tears, she begins to notice the peace of her surroundings and comes eventually to a tree she loves to climb. As she surveys the beauty, she becomes more composed and is able to return to the loving arms of family. Bang's use of colour to create the moods of fury and serenity add great depth to this simple story.

🍁 Bourgeois, Paulette

Franklin in the Dark

ISBN 092110331X

What a charming story arose from watching an episode of *M*A*S*H*, when Hawkeye expressed his fear of the dark while holed up in a cave. Paulette Bourgeois used that event to create her lovable and timeless turtle and his first dilemma. Kids appreciate his curiosity and his vulnerability as he discovers that what other animals fear is not what bothers him. His newfound friends cannot help him overcome his greatest fear. It's Mama to the rescue and soon Franklin is 'snug as a bug', tucked in for the night.

Carle, Eric

Mister Seahorse

ISBN 0399242694

Eric Carle has an astonishing way of teaching children lessons in his books and making it seem like the best kind of play. He introduces us to the father seahorse as the caregiver in the family and then takes us on an underwater journey to show us other dads who take responsibility for the nurture and protection of their young ones. His signature and brilliant tissue paper collages provide the perfect setting. We come away from the story with great respect for those caring dads and with new knowledge about some creatures of the sea.

🍁 Carter, Anne Laurel

Under a Prairie Sky

ISBN 155143282X

The illustrations for this book provide a lesson in prairie living and make a strong case for the beauty we find here. A young boy dreams of being a Mountie and, one day, gets a chance to prove his mettle. Donning similar attire to that of his heroes, he mounts his trusty steed and sets off in search of his younger brother who has wandered away. A fierce prairie storm adds some tension; but, even at a very tender age, this young boy proves the adage that the Mounties 'always get their man.' The sights, the sounds, the drama of life on the prairie provinces should put this book at the top of your list.

Cowley, Joy

Red Eyed Tree Frog

ISBN 0590871757

Now here is a frog with personality. He's slimy and he lives in the rain forest. He's been sleeping all day and he's hungry, so he sets out to find some grub. Unbeknownst to him, there are many dangers in his environs and he must do his best to find a meal, not become one. The brilliance of this magnificent setting is evident on every page. Nic Bishop's perspectives are quite spectacular and the reader definitely understands what it means to be such a tiny, vulnerable creature. The text is simple, but effective. Which is your favourite...the escape from the boa or the capture of that huge moth?

 Denton, Kady**Amber Waiting**

ISBN 0889952582

Amber loves every minute of her kindergarten day; but that pleasure is soon wiped out by the misery of waiting for her father to pick her up...a task he doesn't take too seriously. Amber waits, and waits, and waits. She fancies herself in a world where roles are reversed and it is her Dad who does the waiting. When he finally does arrive, she admonishes him for his tardiness and he realizes what he has done. Amber is overcome with relief and forgiveness, but she had made her point. Kady Denton's illustrations give such honour to the child and her world, filling every space with Amber's thoughts and feelings.

Donaldson, Julia

The Gruffalo

ISBN 0333710932

This book reveals another case of the tiny taking on the immense and winning through cunning and trickery. What child wouldn't love that? When the mouse meets a fox, an owl, and a snake, all intent on making him their dinner, he quickly invents a terrifyingly fantastic character who will knock their socks off...and who just happens to love roasted fox and other such delectable treats for his dinner. They are not deterred until they meet said GRUFFALO. Then, the tables are turned. Imagine the gruffalo's surprise when he discovers that all the predatory creatures of the forest are afraid of the mouse...and the mouse's favourite food is *gruffalo crumble*.

Fleischman, Paul

Sidewalk Circus

ISBN 0763611077


What an extraordinary view for a young girl waiting patiently for an early morning bus! As she watches circus posters being put up, her everyday world becomes imaginatively entangled with the imminent arrival of the world famous Garibaldi Circus. The only text is found on the posters and the collaboration of this team is quite spectacular...they create a world of shadows and drama that only she can see. And when her bus comes, there is another to take her place and dream his own circus dreams.

Fox, Mem

Harriet, You'll Drive Me Wild!

ISBN 0152045988

Mem Fox is a master at creating text for our earliest readers. She uses repetitive phrases, familiar events, and perfect words to make her stories come alive for her audience. In this book we meet Harriet and her mother who are at odds with each other over Harriet's behaviour. She seems like an accident waiting to happen and Mom gets mighty ornery as each new event unfolds. Harriet doesn't mean to have accidents and Mom doesn't mean to yell, but such things happen for small children and their mothers. In the end, love wins out...and all is as it should be.

 Gilman, Phoebe**Something from Nothing**

ISBN 0590745573

When the birth gift that Joseph receives from his grandfather becomes tattered, Joseph's mother suggests it be discarded. Grandpa to the rescue! From the shabby remains of his grandson's favourite blanket, Grandpa first fashions a jacket, then a vest, a tie, and, finally, a button. When the button is lost, there is nothing to be done. Now it is up to Joseph to solve the problem...surprise! Oh...and be sure to follow the parallel story happening below the floorboards of the family home in the Polish shtetl.

🍁 Heidbreder, Robert **Drumheller Dinosaur Dance** ISBN 1553373936

If you've ever wandered the hills near Drumheller and tried to imagine what must have taken place there millions of years ago, this book will set your toes to tapping and your imagination on a wild ride. While most adults think that the noise that emanates from the earth at night is really thunder, budding paleontologists know that the sounds come from landlocked dinos in search of fun and frolic. They creep across the Badlands to celebrate in rhythmic reverie while humans sleep. Kids can join them...if they believe!

🍁 Jocelyn, Marthe **Hannah's Collections** ISBN 0887766900

Hannah loves to collect 'things' and does so with zest. Her room features an endless assortment of each of her treasured collections. When the teacher suggests that the children in Hannah's class might bring a favoured group of items to school on Friday, Hannah is faced with a dilemma. How will she choose? Her ingenious solution is perfect, and she is delighted with the result.

🍁 Jocelyn, Marthe **Mayfly** ISBN 0887766765

A memoir of the best kind for our young readers, this book tells the story of one family's annual summer vacation. As the school closes its doors in late June, Mom and the kids prepare for their yearly trek to the cottage. Each event is a part of the traditions, from packing the suitcases to saying goodbye to the streets and stores and hello to summer. When the lazy days have been enjoyed in a myriad of ways, they head for home...new shoes, and a new school year. It won't be long, though, until their return.

🍁 Lee, Dennis **Alligator Pie** ISBN 1552633381

Prior to its initial publication in 1974, Canadian children often only recited familiar Mother Goose rhymes. With the release of *Alligator Pie*, they found new words to get their tongues around and a whole new set of poems to savour. They recited them with gusto, and great pleasure. This is Canadian children's poetry at its best...memorable, fun, and full of words and names that give us pride of place. It's the perfect way to get young readers hooked on poetry!

Lester, Mike **A is for Salad** ISBN 0698119266

This is one of those alphabet books that have kids thinking 'I can do that!' It won't take them long to realize the premise that Lester has chosen to stand the alphabet on its head. It is the alligator eating the salad that begins this nonsense trip. Cartoon-like creatures sporting surprising duds will have kids laughing out loud and begging for more. A lesson in abstract thinking using simple cartoon characters might encourage kids to put their thinking caps on and see what they can deliver. Finally, the author uses an endnote to suggest other words that might have been used for each letter.

 Lesynski, Loris**Nothing Beats a Pizza**

ISBN 1550377000

Read these poems aloud, and do it with pizzazz! So suggests poet extraordinaire Lesynski who fills her pages with riotous rhyme and quirky characters that live life to its fullest, and with the best intentions. She is a master of wordplay and this book again promises many happy hours of reading. Her illustrations invite comment and suggest ways to use the poetry and to create your own. Filled with a delight in language, Lesynski does her best to pass it along with a subject sure to grab even the most reluctant, aspiring poet.

Levenson, George

Bread Comes to Life

ISBN 1582461147

The Little Red Hen would have loved this stunningly photographed book that truly brings life to the oldest food that remains part of our modern diet. It would have helped her understand the origin of the many delicious and colourful loaves that adorn dining tables throughout the world. The simple, rhythmic text provides all the information needed in this high-quality nonfiction piece of writing. Pair it with the video of the same name and a trip to the mentioned website for a true culinary experience and much new learning.

Liu, Jae-Soo

Yellow Umbrella

ISBN 1929122360

This wordless book begins with one yellow umbrella. A red and then a blue umbrella join it. They are followed by many other colours and they set themselves out in a variety of configurations as they make a long and interesting journey toward school. The dazzling hues of the umbrella tops stand out in contrast to the dull grey of the rain-laden sky. As with other books without text, there is no end to the interpretations that young children will make when sharing this book. The fact that it has an accompanying CD, filled with the sounds of falling rain and gentle piano pieces, adds to the anticipated pleasure.

 Reid, Barbara**The Party**

ISBN 0590124285

If you have ever been to a family party, you will know what inspired Barbara Reid to tell this story. From the cheek pinching adulation of an embarrassing aunt to the heavily laden picnic table, you will recognize someone from your family as you participate in this 90th birthday party for Gran. Personalities jump off the page, as does the energy and excitement of the events of this daylong affair. The initial apprehension soon disappears as the children connect with each other once again. When the time comes to leave, all are reluctant to end the fun.

Riley, Linda

Elephants Swim

ISBN 0395934893

In rhyming text we are introduced to sixteen animals and their activities in the water. There is much to learn. The author is not content to leave us with the accompanying text. She adds further information in an afterword and thus encourages additional interest. The cut paper collages afford us a clear and close-up look at the ways in which a diverse group of appealing animals finds solace in the water. The language is gentle and well chosen; the illustrations are charming. This is a terrific example of nonfiction and is accessible to our young readers.

🍁 Schwartz, Roslyn

The Mole Sisters

ISBN 155037883X

If you have not met the Mole Sisters yet, you are in for a special surprise! In this book that contains their ten tiny treasured adventures, you will come to know and love them as many young children do. Each sister is the perfect companion to the other. They are feisty, thoughtful, bright, and charming. Their adventurous natures rouse envy and admiration in their fans. Although the publisher has chosen to compile this collection, teachers would be wont to have each tiny little book in the hands of the children in my class. They are perfect for holding and for taking home for a bedtime read.

Shannon, George

Tomorrow's Alphabet

ISBN 0688164242

Alphabet books abound and it takes some looking to find the truly excellent ones. In this book George Shannon uses the premise that what we have with us today will be something quite different tomorrow. (A is for seed...tomorrow's apple.) It's true magic is to sit back and watch as young listeners discover the author's premise...that AHA! moment. The illustrations fill the pages with realistic and brilliant visual depictions of the game that he is playing with his audience.

Silverstein, Shel

The Giving Tree

ISBN 0060256656

Many educators have been reading this book aloud for as long as they've been teaching and it never loses its appeal. It is a lesson in selfless giving and serves to teach us that unconditional love is a wondrous, and sad, affair. When the boy is young, the tree provides shade, a place to play, and food. As he grows and his demands increase, the tree gives all that is asked. When there is nothing left but a stump, the tree is still able to offer comfort and love. Simple text and perfect illustrations make this book a bestseller forty years after it was originally published.

Walsh, Ellen Stoll

Mouse Paint

ISBN 0152081182

This author's books offer tiny, winsome creatures that teach us a thing or two and they are often requested for shared reading times. The three tiny mice in this book about colour mixing are the perfect characters for this charming display. They finagle themselves into primary coloured paint jars and then wander through the pages mixing colour with abandon, thus teaching the reader the principle that mixing the three primary colours on the colour wheel results in the creation of three additional colours. All work together to present a world of beauty.

Wood, Audrey

Quick as a Cricket

ISBN 0859531511

A simile can be a difficult concept to teach young children and, yet, it is a most effective way of helping them visualize what they are reading or hearing. Audrey and Don Wood have here created a wonderful book filled with similes that kids will understand, and with engaging artwork that brings this descriptive strategy to full and vibrant life. It won't be long until they are testing their own powers of observation and language.

DEVELOPING

Agee, Jon

Milo's Hat Trick

ISBN 0786809027

Milo is a pitiful magician, threatened with the cancellation of his show. He determines that he needs a helper and finds one in a bear that he lures into action. Together, they enthrall audiences with their magical mysteries. They sell out the theatre day after day. As winter approaches, Bear grows weary and soon he is soundly asleep for the season. Milo must find a new star for the show...himself!

Baker, Jeannie

Home

ISBN 0066239354

In inspiring collages, Jeanne Baker introduces us to Tracy's neighbourhood as it looks when she is a newborn. In the years between her birth and the birth of her first child, we watch that neighbourhood change through charming and meticulous urban renewal. Our perspective is always through Tracy's bedroom window. Baker does not need text; she lets her artwork present the story.

Blake, Quentin

Clown

ISBN 0099493616

When Clown is thrown out like so much trash, he takes it upon himself to find help for the friends who were unceremoniously dumped there with him. In a series of adventures, he eventually gives help where and when it is needed, only to be rewarded with support for his own quest. Text is not needed to tell Clown's story; Quentin Blake admirably brings him to life through lively and expressive watercolour illustrations.

Browne, Anthony

The Shape Game

ISBN 0374367647

When Anthony's mother determines that her 'boys' need a trip to the art museum, she sets them on a new course for life. They amble through the halls making connections with their own life and taking great delight in what they see. Dad fills the day with daft humour that will have readers laughing out loud at the nonsense. For the trip home Mom provides supplies for a great new game that keeps her sons intrigued and engaged. Watch Browne's art palette change from the day's dreary beginning to its delightful finale!

Cole, Henry

On the Way to the Beach

ISBN 0688175155

Come along with our young narrator as she makes the trek from her house to the nearby beach. As she goes, she passes through the woods, into a salt marsh, over the dunes, and onto the beach. In each habitat, the author provides a foldout spread of the natural world. As readers, we are encouraged to sit and listen to our surroundings and to take note of the beauty that is there. What a great model for young writers to encourage them to write about what they know!

Dahl, Roald**The Fantastic Mr. Fox**

ISBN 0141301139

Roald Dahl once said that he was lucky to laugh at the things that made children laugh. Taking that tenet to heart, he has created some of the world's funniest readalouds. Lucky for us! In this short novel, he introduces his eternally memorable characters in the early chapters. He then sends them on a series of adventures that have kids and their parents cheering on the Fox family as they try to outwit the three bumbling farmers, Boggis, Bunce and Bean. They, in turn, are doing their best to keep their chickens safe from Mr. Fox.

Davies, Nicola

Bat Loves the Night

ISBN 0763624381

Nicola Davies is adept at using dual fonts to create a narrative text, while also incorporating just enough additional factual information to satisfy young researchers. She uses lively and expressive language to tell her story, detailed and delicate paintings to create her characters and their habitat, and a scientific voice to add to our knowledge of the pipistrelle bat and its routines. We see the bat in sweeping landscapes, painted in shades of blue and brown, to give us a sense of its nightly jaunts in search of food for its young.

Feiffer, Jules

Bark, George

ISBN 0062051857

What a perfectly silly book! You just know kids will love it. George creates concern for his mother when he cannot bark like other dogs. Instead, he meows, oinks, quacks and moos. From tiny George a human vet removes all manner of farmyard animal, including a cow. George's mother is ecstatic when the problem seems to be solved. But, you know it doesn't end there. Feiffer's ability to give human traits to these two fine dogs is endearing. Using little background clutter to distract from his characters, and only pastels for colour, he creates a book that will delight even the most serious reader.

🍁 Fitch, Sheree

Mable Murple

ISBN 0385256345

In 'lip-slippy' language Sheree Fitch introduces us to her charming and disarming Mabel. Mabel loves the colour purple and her world is filled with it. She lives in a purple house, and has a purple cat. She wears purple polka dot pajamas and skis on purple snow. Nothing pleases her more than more purple in her already purple world. Rollicking rhyme and tongue-twisting text make this a favoured Read Aloud and one that young readers ask to hear again and again. Imagine their pleasure when they are able to read it to each other.

🍁 Fitch, Sheree

There's a Mouse in the House

ISBN 0385257066

You've never met a mouse like Scheherazade! Mom finds her in the house and her resulting panic demands its demise. Before her son can do the deed, the mouse appeals to his kinder self and asks him to grant her three wishes...a can of pop, some cheese, and a chance to tell her story. What a storyteller she turns out to be; and the young man is soon convinced that Scheherazade will entertain them for a 'thousand' nights with tales of her travels and her many important relatives (Hickory, Dickory and Dock and the Three Blind Mice, to name but a few). Ms. Fitch is as always...hilarious and entertaining.



Gay, Marie-Louise

Stella, Princess of the Sky

ISBN 0888996012

Stella, the big, know-it-all sister and her little, naïve preschooler brother, Sam, are back in their fourth book. For young readers who want familiar characters and funny storylines, they are a #1 hit. Sam has all the questions and Stella has all the answers. As they explore dusk and the night sky, Sam divulges his many fears and Stella assures him that all will be well. When he asks if raccoons wear masks because they are robbers, Stella calms him by saying that they are only going to a costume party. Gay's subdued and quirky watercolours provide a perfect setting for one sibling to learn much from another.

Graham, Joan B

Flicker Flash

ISBN 0618311025

What an illuminating and brilliant way to bring poetry to children! In her 23 concrete poems dealing with the many forms of light, Graham creates sparkling, rhythmic images to be interpreted through the graphic illustrations of Nancy Davis. Together they have provided a shining example of word placement, well-chosen text, and dramatically bold art for readers to use when trying their hand at poetry in its most concrete form. Pair this book with Graham's waterlogged *Splish Splash* to provide dramatic appeal for the eye and the mind.

Grossman, Bill

My Little Sister Hugged an Ape

ISBN 0517800179

Unmitigated silliness ensues when the little sister from Grossman's first book, *My Little Sister Ate One Hare*, turns her talents to hugging as many animals as she can in this alphabet adventure that will have kids holding their sides and rolling on the floor. Little Sis is not afraid to try her hugging on any animal...large, small, prickly, or stinky. Adults may not appreciate the truly disgusting rhymes, but kids will love them and learn a bit about the alphabet as they read on...and on. Kids with huge heads and popping-out eyes people the pages and add to the absolute fun of this hilarious readaloud.



Hartry, Nancy


Jocelyn and the Ballerina

ISBN 1550418033

Jocelyn loves her ballerina outfit more than anything else in her small world. It is worn and tatty, but she does not want to be parted from it. When Mom threatens to get rid of it, Jocelyn is frantic. As a flower girl for her aunt, Jocelyn will not be permitted to wear it. When the 'pink' arrives and Jocelyn tries it on, she is distraught. The 'pink' has no twirl! She will not be thwarted in her desire to wear her ballerina outfit at the wedding. As she strolls down the aisle, it becomes evident that Jocelyn has won the battle. Kids will love the resulting mayhem!

Hoberman, Mary Ann	You Read to Me, I'll Read to You	
	Very Short Stories	ISBN 0316363502
	Very Short Fairy Tales	SBN 0316146110
	Very Short Mother Goose Tales	ISBN 0316144312

This is an outstanding series of read-together books that provide hours of fun and learning between parent and child, or child and child, or teacher and child. If our goal for children is to help them learn to love reading by experiencing the sheer joy of it, these books will take us a long way toward satisfying that goal. They are presented in three columns, and colour-coded to help readers establish their role in the reading. Each short story sports purple print for the first reader, red for the second, and blue for both voices together. What a time they will have reading these superbly choreographed dances of rhythm, rhyme, and repetition!

 Hutchins, Hazel	A Second is a Hiccup	ISBN 0439974003
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What great luck to have Kady Denton illustrate a text that calls for energy and colour when dealing with the notion of time and how it affects young children. She fills every page with fun and frolic as these children explore time from the infinitesimal one second to the almost unimaginable full year. Most young children have no innate need to know about time and are not too interested in its passage. Hutchins' text gives each of the measurements a clear context and her rhyming words help readers make a connection to its passage.

Jenkins, Steve	Actual Size	ISBN 0618375945
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Torn paper collages, compact text, and bold comparisons and measurements for 18 diverse animals make this a book that readers will pore over again and again. Jenkins' admirable artwork and authentic information is testament to the diversity in our natural world and provides a model for the importance of clarity, measurement, observation, and comparison where scale is everything. He uses creatures great and small to create an 'aaah' factor for those who share this unique and intriguing book. At the end, he adds full pictures for each of the creatures with a detailed note about their habits and habitat. The premise seems simple, while the information is very clear and kids will be comparing themselves to the brilliant collages time and again.

 Jennings, Sharon	The Bye-Bye Pie	ISBN 1550417851
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When Grandma makes the announcement that she is leaving to live in Greenland for a year, her family decides to host a send-off party. Joey is the big brother and he wants to help with all of the preparations. He discourages his little brother, Alfie, from helping by telling him that he is too little. But, when push comes to shove, it is Alfie who helps Joey out of a tight spot and provides some comic relief in a sticky situation. Grandma's sendoff is a smashing success! As the pièce de résistance, the boys provide the family's secret recipe for 'bye bye pie' to anyone who might want to bake it for their next party.

Koller, Jackie**No Such Thing**

ISBN 1563974908

This wonderful story serves as a comeuppance for all those parents who insist to their children, be they monster or human, that their fears are unfounded. When a small boy suggests that there is a monster under his bed, his mother is adamant that he is imagining it. The same happens when a little monster tries to convince his mother that there ARE such things as boys. As the parents finally depart after mild assurances that all will be well, our two young heroes come face to face and set the wheels in motion to serve up a lesson for each respective mother. Hilarity ensues, proving that all is well that ends well.

Posada, Mia

Dandelions

ISBN 1575053837

If you have been the recipient of daily bouquets of these brilliant, yellow flowers throughout their extended growing season, this is a book that you might want to pull from the shelf and share with the 'pickers'. It details the cyclical nature of the dandelion's growth from adult flower whose tufts are carried to new places where they might begin again through germination, growth, and 'seeding out'. Posada's dazzling illustrations could carry this story without words. The flowing, rhythmic text gives an overview of the dandelion in all its glory and could be used for a variety of reasons...the seasons, pollination, and adaptation are a few.

Rankin, Joan

Wow! It's Great Being a Duck

ISBN 0689840470

Are you looking for author and illustrator strategies when helping your kids find books to love? This book is filled with imaginative and expressive language, varying fonts, wide-ranging sentence structures, humour, and a bit of suspense. Lillie is the last and smallest duckling and her greatest wish is to always keep her feet on the ground. That certainly poses problems when she meets Mr. Furry-Legs, Long-Tail, Sharp-Snout, Pink-Tongued Fox whose favourite dish is fat duckling. When she gets in real trouble, her innate abilities come to her rescue.

Rankin, Laura

The Handmade Alphabet

ISBN 0140558764


In detailed, ever-changing illustrations Laura Rankin shows us the beauty of American Sign Language and intrigues the reader with new learning. Using coloured pencils on charcoal paper, she brings her alphabet to life with hands as diverse as the words chosen to depict each letter on separate pages. It is a book for everyone. She helps to raise awareness for the language of the deaf, and to bring it to young students through her thoughtful and lovely artwork. To add to the appeal one might pose a question: whose hands are holding each figure and why do they have it?

Reynolds, Peter

The Dot

ISBN 0763619612

Have you ever doubted the value of a little encouragement? In Vashti's case, it is an astute art teacher who provides just the right push when she is sure that an artist she is NOT. He suggests that she make her mark on the paper and when she provides a miniscule dot, he has her sign it and then displays it in a distinctive frame. She is dumbfounded and immediately certain that she can do better...which she does. When her art is hung for all to see, she becomes the idol of another young and uncertain artist. Now, it is Vashti's turn to provide the encouragement. When you have finished with this lovely book, be sure to share Reynolds' next book about art, called *Is/*.

 Ruurs, Margriet**Emma and the Coyote**

ISBN 0773762051

There are three funny books about Emma. You learn early on that she is one feisty and fearsome chicken. She walks into every situation with her eyes wide open and an invisible cloak of naïveté. In this yarn she knows that she is smarter than a coyote (when no one else does) and she sets out to prove exactly that. Young readers will love each of the characters, from the self-assured Emma to the aggressive coyote. Each creature comes to vibrant life at the hands of an astute illustrator...that simply adds to all the fun as Emma outwits her nemesis time and again.

Warner, Gertrude Chandler

The Boxcar Children

ISBN 0807508527

Kids love to listen to this tale of four orphans who strike out on their own to make a life together. When they find the boxcar and begin to fend for themselves, we cannot help but cheer them on. They do what we all would like to do at some point in our lives...be on our own. There is suspense, excitement, pride, and, finally, a sense of contentment as they get help from a very unlikely place. This is a memorable and wonderfully uplifting novel for children to read alone, or together with friends.

TRANSITIONAL

Brisson, Pat **The Summer My Father Was Ten** ISBN 1563978296

Perfect when talking about memoir with your students, this book tells a heartfelt story that is a turning point for a young man, the narrator's father. We are initially introduced to the boy's neighbour, an old man who loves opera and gardening. When an afternoon of baseball turns destructive, the boy and his friends are left to answer the question 'WHY?' It has no easy answer. He does his best to atone for his wanton disregard of another's property and, in doing so, he garners a lifetime friendship and a newfound love of gardening.

Brown, Ruth **Toad** ISBN 009940382X

Brown's descriptive powers are perfect for this swamp story. Who could love a toad? And love him we do not! He smells, oozes slime, and is aberrant to all our other senses. He is noisy, slippery, and UGLY! Surrounded by the beauty of his environment, he drips the greens and browns that permeate his habitat. As we closely consider his antics, we cannot help but notice that we are not the only watchers. When the skulking hulk that follows his every move finally captures him, we are quick to learn why the toad does not complain about his lot in life.

Bunting, Eve **The Wednesday Surprise** ISBN 0395547768

Many cannot read this book without tears. Such a story! Anna and her grandmother have a great love. They spend much time together while Daddy drives his big truck from city to city, and Mom works. On Wednesdays they hatch a surprise for Dad's birthday. They work very hard, with a big bag of books and many evenings shared. At long last, the big day arrives. Dad is not the only one in for a big surprise!

Cooper, Elisha **Dance!** ISBN 0060294191

For those who love to dance, this book will conjure up memories of long hours of practice, focused attention on new steps, and the pain that accompanies the lead-up rehearsals to opening night. There is not much of the glory and drama of that anticipated performance. For those of us, like Cooper, who watch from the sidelines and can only admire the grit and stamina of the dancers, it is a clear observation of all that overwhelms us. His pen and ink drawings, accompanied by wandering text, provide awareness for the reader of the call of 'the dance'.

Crews, Donald **Shortcut** ISBN 0688135765

This prolific author has so much to teach us about writing in this dramatic story of a summer visit to the grandparents in Florida. In that particular summer the grandchildren are off to entertain themselves when they come upon the railroad tracks. They know they should not walk there, but they are tired and the tracks provide a shortcut to Bigmama's. Besides, they can't see, or hear, a train. What's the harm? With great luck, they avoid almost certain injury and they never speak of the incident again. Well, that may not be quite true.

Davies, Nicola

Surprising Sharks

ISBN 0763627429

Nicola Davies has such a way of dealing with information in a humorous and enlightening way. There are only three kinds of sharks that attack people regularly...and only six kill someone each year. While I know you are saying that six is too many, you might be interested to know that crocodiles, elephants, dogs, and pigs kill more people than sharks do every year. Look at what you can learn from exemplary informational writing! Davies also advises that while the last word that we might want to hear when entering the water is 'shark', the same holds true for the shark. The last word they want to hear is human, since 100 million sharks are killed each year by humans!

 Duggan, Paul**Murphy the Rat**

ISBN 0889950849

Can there be more fun than reading poetry to kids? What could be better than fun poems that speak to a kid's innate sense of rhythm and their propensity for loving anything that is remotely upsetting, or gross, to their parents and teachers? Such is the case with this spirited collection of poems. In Tough City, where legions of rats like Murphy hold court, there is mayhem at every turn. As they come to know the characters, and their quirks and foibles, kids will be begging for 'take-out', or repeated readings. Get to know Murphy and the gang...you won't be sorry!

 Grassby, Donna**A Seaside Alphabet**

ISBN 0887765165

Do you think that all prairie people long for a holiday on a coastal shore? Is it that it is so foreign to our experience? Those who have spent their lives listening to the waves lap the shore, watching soaring seabirds, smelling the salty air, and feeling the winds whip through tousled hair cannot imagine living anywhere else. In this beautifully detailed, alliterative alphabet book the reader becomes part of the events on the Atlantic coast, from Maine to Nova Scotia and PEI. The detailed notes that follow the text make it as useful as it is beautiful.

 Greenwood, Barbara**A Pioneer Story**

ISBN 15507441284

Starring the Robertsons, especially Sarah and her little brother, Willy, this book is set on an Eastern Canadian farm in 1840. Their stories are told as short vignettes, accompanied by instructions and explanations for many of the events that were part of their daily lives. Following the children through a full year, we are introduced to a way of life that has long since passed, and given a close-up view of some of the difficulties and challenges that faced each family member as the sun rose every morning. The black and white illustrations add to our sense of being with the Robertsons as they face life as pioneers in a new land.

Janeczko, Paul

Dirty Laundry Pile

ISBN 0688162517

Selected by a man who believes that poetry must be spoken daily in every school classroom, this anthology of verses provides diversity and clever repartee in a series of voices that are as unusual as they are varied. Their words are penned by some of our most prolific poets and, also, by some of our newest. It is a collection that begs to be read aloud, and often. Imagine yourself a snowflake, a kite, or even a dirty laundry pile and see what you have to say. Or strike out on your own, and create new voices to be shared.

Jenkins, Steve **Hottest, Coldest, Highest, Deepest** ISBN 061849488X

Take a smattering of the Guinness Book of World Records, mix it with intriguing facts from the natural world, and put both in the hands of a talented and accomplished artist...voila! You have this guide to the world and its many wonders. Cut paper collages provide a clear look at the highest mountain, longest river, the hottest spot and the list goes on. Jenkins' ability to show perspective through his art and add informative text will have young scientific minds devouring his words through many readings.

🍁 Kaner, Etta **Animals Migrating** ISBN 1553375483

Migration is one of the true wonders of the natural world. This book is filled with the thrilling tales of a host of animals and the yearly treks that they make, while facing untold dangers and intolerable weather. The tone is chatty, the style is very appealing, and the information provided is absorbing. The line and watercolour illustrations provide a close-up view for each journey taken. AMAZING! Kaner's personal style makes this book more appealing and the host of hands-on activities will have fans poring over it time and again. Discussion is sure to follow.

🍁 Little, Jean **Orphan at My Door** ISBN 0439988349

The *Dear Canada* series offers a look at Canada's history through the eyes of its children. The books are created by some of our most venerated authors and give accurate diary accounts of the life and times of young women. That could be one of their drawbacks...don't boys write diaries? Well, journals then! In this one we learn about the Home children who came from Britain for placement with Canadian families, often as servants and mothers' helpers. Jean Little tells Victoria's story with her usual sensitivity. It is evident that she did her research and wrote it with admiration for the children who emigrated to a new and unfamiliar land.

🍁 Matas, Carol **Play Ball!** ISBN 1552635570

It's the early 1900s in New York City. After a recent move Rosie is not making friends and is spending her free time working at her father's nickelodeons. When her brother's baseball team is short a player, Rosie knows that she can help. Girls are not allowed to play ball though. Dressed as a boy, Rosie is able to fool her teammates and the opposing team, until a fall reveals her secret. The baseball scenes are detailed and authentic, the characters rich and diverse, and the action is fast paced. One of three Rosie adventures, this is a book that will appeal to those interested in historical fiction and a good sports story.

Moss, Marissa **Amelia's Notebook** ISBN 1562477846

If you want your kids to see what a writer's notebook can look like, you need to meet Amelia. She is a headstrong, opinionated and perceptive nine-year-old who has a lot to say. In this book, that resembles a school composition book, she shares her views and interpretation of life as she lives it. She does it with pizzazz and feeling, and she includes artifacts, drawings and admonitions to those who should not be reading her notebook (her older and bothersome sister). It is an example of what kids can do to record the things that are important to them and will be a timeworn treasure at some future point.

 Munsch, Robert**Lighthouse**

ISBN 0439974585

While sentimental, this book is not schmaltzy and would be a perfect way to get kids talking about memories and the death of a loved one. During the night following her Grandpa's funeral, Sarah awakens with an ache to visit the lighthouse, a place he loved. As she and Dad make their way to their special place, they openly share memories of the Grandpa they have just lost. Those memories are what bring them back to the lighthouse, a tradition that will continue into the fourth generation, if Sarah has anything to do with it. Lovely, expressive illustrations accompany this story about love and death, and the impact of both.

 Oppel, Kenneth**Peg and the Yeti**

ISBN 0002005387

Peg's proven herself seaworthy at eight, and now she has the earth's loftiest peak to conquer. Armed with little to sustain and protect her, she begins her ascent. A night in a cave with a cantankerous Yeti does not deter her. She notes that he likes the snack food she carries. His penchant for pork scrunchions renders him amenable. They travel together to the peak of the mountain. Their descent is met with a quiet acceptance that the Yeti is to have a permanent place in their lives. There is great humour in the cleverly designed constructions of master artist Barbara Reid and a promise of further adventure.

Park, Barbara

Skinnybones

ISBN 067988792X


About the only thing that is big about Alex Frankovich is his mouth...and it is constantly flapping. He is the smallest kid on his Little League team but that doesn't deter him from bragging to T.J. Stoner that he can beat him in a pitching duel. Now, Alex knows that T.J. is the best pitcher on the team and the creepiest kid in school. What would make him open his big mouth and issue such a challenge? You will certainly laugh-out-loud while sharing this story with your students. The sure sign that is tested and true will be the lineup of readers aching to have a chance to read it again, or to hear about other books by Barbara Park. Be sure to have *Almost Starring Skinnybones* on a nearby shelf.

Prelutsky, Jack

If not for the Cat

ISBN 0060596775

There are those that believe that writing haiku is an easy way to get kids interested in poetry. Others can hardly imagine anything tougher: three lines, 17 syllables, unrhymed, a short poem of a 'keenly observed moment' about nature or human nature. Good grief! Jack Prelutsky proves himself a true observer of natural things and an expert at word choice, when he creates 17 quietly elegant haiku, each summarizing the essence of an animal in riddle form. Ted Rand's double page spreads provide the answers, a perfect match executed with subtlety.

 Sadler, Judy Ann**Hemp Jewelry**

ISBN 1553377753

As is the case with earlier books in the *Kids Can Do It* series, this book delivers great ideas, instructions and interest in a craft that kids can master. The 16 projects are preceded by a list of the materials and tools that will be needed to complete any of the described jewelry. The colour photographs that accompany the clear, step-by-step instructions give the crafter a clear idea of the results. Looking at this book might encourage students to seek others in the series that includes birdhouses, face painting, native crafts, and quilting. The list is fairly extensive.

Schachner, Judith

Skippyjon Jones

ISBN 0142404039


Holy frijoles! You've never met a cat like Skippyjon Jones. He is the bane of his mother's existence and he is routinely sent to his room to think about what it means to be a Siamese cat. What freethinking kitten, when faced with isolation, would not let his imagination fly wild and free? Certainly not Skippyjon Jones. Soon, he is off on the adventure of a lifetime in chihuahua guise, with the full intention of taking on any lowlife bandito who crosses his path. Oh, the fun that awaits! Be prepared to read this book once more...or twice...or ten times.

Schnur, Steven

Autumn

ISBN 0395770432

Interested in acrostics? You cannot help it when you have allowed yourself the visual treat that accompanies the innovative and clever wordplay in this ode to the fall season. Harvesting images as you share this alphabet book is not a tedious task. In poetic prose Schnur creates riddles for all 26, which are answered in the first letter of each line of the witty acrostic. Linoleum block prints are clean, bright, and clue-laden. What a great word game and a perfect model for further writing!

 Setterington, Ken**The Wild Swans**

ISBN 0887766153

Ken Setterington weaves elements from both the Andersen and Grimm versions to tell this timeless tale of a king who makes a promise to marry a woman who might be a witch. It is his only hope for finding his home and returning to his children. Fearing that his children will be harmed, he hides his eleven sons and one daughter from her. She ultimately discovers these sons and casts a spell upon them. It is left to the young sister to save her brothers. Her task is arduous, but the result is heartwarming. The *scherschnitt* artwork adds an old world quality to the drama and is explained in full detail in an afterword to the text.

Sidman, Joyce**Song of the Water Boatman**

ISBN 0618135472

What a combination! Take a little science, mix it with poetic form, and sprinkle in a touch of melody. Look to the seasons to give direction to the pond poems that grace the pages of this intricately illustrated book. Beginning in spring we meet the pond creatures whose songs herald its fresh delights. As we amble through summer and plod into autumn, we closely observe the comings and goings of the many creatures and plants that give the pond life. As winter makes its presence felt, the pond settles into quiet...patiently waiting for spring to burst forth once again. A prose paragraph accompanies each poem to give scientific data a pride of place in this exceptional book.

🍁 Staunton, Ted

Morgan Makes a Splash

ISBN 0887806228

This is the 28th in a series called *First Novels*. They are appropriate fare for readers who are aching to read a 'chapter book'. We meet Morgan, a chubby kid, who doesn't like being at the pool where kids will see his body jiggle. His mother signs him up for swimming lessons, but of all people to be there is Aldeen, the class bully. She, too, has an aversion to the water but threatens Morgan with all manner of repercussions if he rats her out. He is finally able to make her see that she will be discovered avoiding the lessons and convinces her to step up to the plate and pass her test. Humour, good character development, and an understanding of the motivation for their actions make this a fine read.

Whatley, Bruce

Wait! No Paint!

ISBN 0064435466

The role that an illustrator plays in the creation of a worthy piece of children's literature is at its most evident here. The three little pigs have left home and built their own houses. An accident with spilled juice causes collapse in the straw house. Where did the juice come from, and whose is that Voice? It takes no time at all to learn that the illustrator has a big part in the theatrics that make this book sing. When he runs out of red paint, the results are comedic. As the pigs change from green, to patterned, and finally polka-dotted, they become painfully aware that there will be no fire. Now what?

EXPANDING

Arnosky, Jim **Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing Animal Habitats** ISBN 689835388

Jim Arnosky is a master at making the world of nature attractive and accessible for his readers. He sets a tone of respect and honour for all the creatures and habitats he finds in each of the places he visits on his many journeys of discovery. His accurate sketches, detailed captions, authentically researched labels, and unparalleled love of all things natural are evident in his many fine nonfiction books. He encourages readers to look with an artist's eye at the world and to chronicle what they see in personal sketchbooks.

Avi **Poppy** ISBN 038072769

Want a new readaloud that will have kids sitting on the edges of their seats? If you haven't discovered Poppy and the other resident creatures of Dimwood Forest, you're in for a real treat. Poppy is a tiny deer mouse that loves and loses a jive-talking mate named Ragweed at the hands of the resident despot, Ocax the horned owl. Ocax promises safe passage to a new home so long as he is unconditionally obeyed. This flies in the face of Poppy's independent nature. After Ocax devours Ragweed, Poppy takes matters into her own hands and eventually leads her large extended family to a new home. Powerful characters, great action, and further adventures make this series a sure hit.

Bang, Molly **The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher** ISBN 0689803818

The grey lady loves strawberries; but so does the little imp who chooses to dog her every move in hopes of stealing her treasure. No matter where she goes, he is there. Managing to elude him in ingenious ways, the wily woman leads him into a dark and deep wood where danger lurks. A surprise ending eases the tension and the story finishes on a happy note. This Caldecott Honor book is indicative of Molly Bang's artistic talent and her ability to tell a suspenseful tale with no need for words. Children will return to this book throughout childhood to tell, once more, the story of the grey lady and her love for the bright, sweet, red berries.

 Bourgeois, Paulette **Oma's Quilt** ISBN 1553376250

Oma is not keen to go to the retirement home. She has a lifetime of wonderful memories of her life on Maple Street. Her granddaughter, Emily, is trying to make the transition easier with one last walk through Oma's house and a talk about all the things that have happened there. It doesn't help. Oma is determined not to like her new home. While Mom and Emily gather up the threads of the household she is leaving, Emily decides that a quilt of memories might be just the thing her grandmother needs to help her adjust to a new life.

 Bowers, Vivien**Only in Canada**

ISBN 1894379381

Have you any idea what you don't know about Canada? When you finish reading this wacky, wonderful book from the *WOW Canada!* series, you will be much better informed. Moose and Goose present a wealth of information about our geography, our history, our natural world, and the many Canadians who have made a name for themselves by doing quite remarkable and courageous things. The format is ideal to keep readers reading and filling their heads with what has been gathered and presented in a distinctive and unusual way.

 Carter, Anne Laurel**My Home Bay**

ISBN 0889952841

A family move from one side of Canada (Vancouver) to the other side (Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia) is the premise for this quiet, engaging story. Saying goodbye to British Columbia and all things familiar is unsettling for Gwyn. Their long demanding trip takes its toll, and only three promises make the move tolerable. As the days pass, the promises are kept and new experiences and friends bring solace to the family. Gwyn comes to accept her new environs with a brightness of spirit. Her Christmas gift is the perfect addition to her house near the sea. The soft watercolour illustrations in a pastel palette give the reader a true sense of the wonder that awaited them in 'my home bay'.

Cooper, Helen

Pumpkin Soup

ISBN 0552545104

This book can help young readers understand how proficient and gifted writers teach us reading lessons. This story of three friends who live companionably together in a small white cabin, sharing household tasks and quiet living, is infused with a variety of strategies that guide the reader to success and total enjoyment. When Duck messes with the rhythm of the home, Squirrel and Cat are angry and Duck, disturbed by that wrath, leaves in a huff. Only when he does not return do his housemates dare to imagine what they have driven him to do. The race is on to find their friend.

Davies, Nicola

One Tiny Turtle

ISBN 0744594014

Tony Stead has labeled books of this type 'faction'. It makes perfect sense, for it is a book that combines a winning story with some interesting and well-researched facts. In a pleasing tale, Davies introduces us to the loggerhead turtle and her life in the ocean where she swims for thirty years, until one day she returns to the beach where she was born to lay her eggs. In poetic and lovely language she engages readers and leaves them charmed by the turtle whose arduous travels we have shared until that night on the beach. Curving lines of text in smaller font add to the information provided in the story of this grand sea creature.

Fleischman, Paul**Weslandia**

ISBN 0763610526

With summer vacation rearing its ugly head, Wesley is just not sure what he will do. Leave it to this bright, focused young man (oft labeled a nerd) to establish his own civilization and name it for himself. A staple crop is the source of all that becomes Weslandia. It is used for shelter, food, clothing, and protection from the sun's rays and distasteful insects. Wesley's world is quite remarkable and the reader will pore over Hawkes' illustrations of that space, slightly askew and remarkably like Wesley himself. Wes is independent and accomplished and he pursues a dream that many would consider worthy; in the end, he attracts those who were his adversaries.

Florian, Douglas

Summersaults

ISBN 0060292679


Doug Florian is currently working on his ode to spring (*Handsprings*) as a follow-up to this and two other seasonal tributes (*Winter Eyes* and *Autumblings*). He established a familiar format from the get-go, using a title poem, followed by two poems extolling his seasonal likes and panning seasonal dislikes. He is a poet who helps convince kids that they 'can do it'...they, too, can write poetry. His poetry comes from his heart and is a result of experiencing the world through all five senses. Here is a wonderful poet to emulate...a new class mentor.

George, Kristine

Old Elm Speaks

ISBN 0395876117

Kristine George does, indeed, have a remarkable way of saying the most beautiful things. Her second book of poems, written simply and in varied poetic forms, pays homage to the mighty tree. Each tiny gem provides a sense of delight in nature that can only be felt and described when one gives undivided attention to the world as we pass through it. Trees play a tremendously important role in our lives and George is quick to remind us of that...in poems that reflect her love and reverence. Pair this lovely book with Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* and readers will come away with a renewed appreciation for these majestic wonders.

 Highway, Tomson**Caribou Song**

ISBN 0002255227

The first of a planned trilogy about the vanishing life of the people of the North, this book is a worthy addition to aboriginal literature collections. The other titles are *Dragonfly Kites* and *Fox on the Ice*. Cody and Joe spend their time following the caribou herd, with their parents and their much-loved dog, Ootsie. Their adventures are chronicled in both Cree and English text, and are accompanied by glistening oil paintings that evoke the spiritual beauty of their northern home. From the spring caribou hunt, through a glorious summer catching dragonflies to chase through tundra meadows, to winter and a wild ride with the sled dogs hot on the trail of a distant fox, Joe and Cody live a charmed life in the glorious world of northern Manitoba.

✻ Lang, Aubrey

Baby Owl

ISBN 1550417983

This is but one book in an outstanding series of nonfiction for beginning readers. The author uses simple, clear text, complemented by flawless and telling photographs. They are very accessible for kids wanting to know more about familiar and appealing babies. Other titles include *Baby Koala*, *Baby Elephant*, *Baby Sloth*, *Baby Penguin*, *Baby Lion*...the list goes on. As we search to find fine information text for younger children, you would not be remiss to make this series part of your classroom (or library) collection.

✻ Lawson, J

Whatever You Do, Don't Go Near That Canoe

ISBN 590124226

We've all been warned...and often those warnings are just too tempting to ignore. Each of us has experienced the direct result of disobedience. When the children are told not to go near the canoe, they just cannot help themselves. The result is a riotous romp with marauding pirates and a treasure chest full of fun. A safe return ensures some of the same when they are subject to a similar warning about a sled. Rhyming text, humorous wordplay, and loveable characters add to the entertainment and establish hope for a follow-up.

✻ Lee, Dennis

Garbage Delight: Another Helping

ISBN 1552634701

First published in 1977, *Garbage Delight* is given new lustre with 24 of the old and 13 new poems, plus the engaging illustrations of the talented Maryann Kovalski. This fresh and appealing reissue is sure to attract a new generation of readers and remind old fans of the fun and delight they experienced when first they heard Mr. Lee's cheeky poems. The crew of garbage-loving raccoons provides a continuous thread for this wonderful update of an old, loved favourite.

Lowry, Lois

All About Sam

ISBN 0440402212

Delighted laughter accompanies the shared reading of this first novel about Anastasia's younger brother, Sam. His arrival brings new meaning and perspective to a family where Anastasia has been the queen of drama for ten years; and provides fodder for stories to be told for years to come. As often happens when a readaloud is highly anticipated and truly enjoyed, listeners will request 'MORE!' Luckily they are available. Have *Attaboy, Sam* (1993), *See You Around, Sam* (1998), and *Zooman Sam* (2001) on hand when the reading is complete. They are a sure-fire hit!

Martin, Bill Jr.

The Ghost-Eye Tree

ISBN 0805009477

A perennial request at Halloween, this lively and expressive story consistently gives listeners goose bumps. Just as the tension builds to a breaking point, Bill Martin adds the perfect dash of humour to lighten the mood and allow the nail-biting adventure to continue. Who can forget Mr. Cowlander and his darkened barn, with only a spot of soft yellow to assure queasy readers? What about the jaunty tilt of the hat that makes the poised brother look less than confident? Ted Rand does a superb job of building parallel dread with his use of colour, shadow, and silhouette.

Pfeffer, Wendy**A Log's Life**

ISBN 0689806361

Learning about life cycles couldn't be more fun! When an oak tree is toppled in the forest during a storm, its life changes and so do the lives of many of the creatures that find food and shelter within it. As it decays, it becomes home to a multitude of living things, such as ants, mushrooms, porcupines, and salamanders. Each finds what it needs within the new ecosystem created by the dying tree. When it finally becomes a mound of rich black earth, and home to an acorn, the cycle renews itself. Excellent dimensional collages hide the many creatures that find life there and give reason for close inspection from all young readers.

Polacco, Patricia

Thunder Cake

ISBN 0698115813

Patricia Polacco looks to her childhood and conjures up magical memories of the many events that have shaped her life and the people who have been her heroes. She honours the memory of her grandmother in many of her published works. In this one, Babushka helps her granddaughter overcome her fear of thunder. Anxiety about the approaching storm has the young granddaughter hiding under her bed. Baba resorts to what she knows best to distract her loved one. In the time it takes to gather all the ingredients for a thunder cake, the storm has passed and our young heroine has learned some very important lessons about herself...thanks to Baba!

Popov, Nikolai

Why?

ISBN 1558589961

In an idyllic meadow a frog sits smelling a pretty posy. Without provocation a mouse, wielding an umbrella, sets upon the frog and steals his flower. The frog seeks help and returns to beat the mouse for stealing his flower. And so it goes until there is nothing left of the meadow but mayhem and destruction. In the final frame, the frog sits staring despondently at his flower while the mouse holds a battered and beaten umbrella. Why? Words could not do this wordless book justice.

 Reid, Barbara**The Subway Mouse**

ISBN 0439952239

Just when you think Barbara Reid cannot outdo her last effort, she does. Her new book shows her remarkable ability to create worlds in one medium and make it look as if she is using many. When life in the subway falls short of his expectations and dreams of finding the legendary Tunnel's End fill his every thought, Nib decides to begin a search. As he travels, he passes numerous other stations, tunnels, and some sleazy characters. After meeting Lola, they travel on together. When all seems lost, they spy a starry sky and the hunt for a better place ends. The artwork is filled with images that could NOT be created with plasticine!

Sayre, April Pulley

Stars Beneath Your Bed

ISBN 0060571888

Have you ever wondered where dust comes from? The author of this informative and absorbing book has done her research and is quick to let us know that the dust we see everywhere has been around for centuries. Dust is made up of many and sundry items and we can find it everywhere...every day. Without dust, we would not see the intense colour of sunrise and sunset. Without dust, raindrops would not form. Then, where would we be? Dust comes from space, the sea, our clothes, and our skin...you name it; it creates dust. No wonder we can't catch up with it!

Schaefer, Lola**What's Up, What's Down?**

ISBN 0060297573

It looks like any other book, but that is where the similarities end. First, the reader must turn the book on its end and begin by looking up. As we proceed from below the earth and make our way ever upward, we are rewarded with a return journey when we go as high as we can go...the moon. Then, turn the book over and begin the descent from neverending sky to ocean bottom. It is a truly intriguing way to look at the natural world. Combine that with stunning lyrical text and meticulous illustrations fashioned in chalk and you have your hands on an award winner.

Singer, Marilyn

Tough Beginnings

ISBN 0805061649

You thought you had it tough when you were a baby...you had to cry when you were hungry, scared, or lonely. You want to know tough? Check out the double page descriptions of 13 baby animals whose introduction to life is no piece of cake. Each spread describes one baby in detailed information boxes, with accompanying artwork that is often dramatic and consistently appealing to young readers. In the end spread, Singer adds ten additional babies. This conversational text, despite its familiarity and lilting tone, makes life seem pretty easy for we humans. Ah, survival of the fittest!

Sis, Peter

Madlenka

ISBN 0888994125

Peter Sis was inspired to write this story of family life using his multi-ethnic New York neighbourhood as the backdrop. At the centre is Madlenka...a young, inquisitive, friendly child who cannot wait to share her lost tooth experience with all of her friends and neighbours. As she skips joyfully around the block, we are privy to the talk, the textures, the cultures, and the enveloping friendship she experiences at each turn.

BRIDGING

Adoff, Arnold

Love Letters

ISBN 0590484788

The rhythms of this master poet's language are evident on every page of his many publications. The poems written for this ode to love and Valentines each stand alone, with carefully designed collage illustrations to exemplify the feelings that one person has for another...many of which can only be shared anonymously. The shy vulnerability of the writers is endearing and might encourage readers to try their hand at writing some poems of their own.

 Bailey, Linda**Stanley's Party**

ISBN 1553377680


You've never met a dog like Stanley. He loves his people, but he just can't abide by all the rules that they foist upon him when they go out...and going out seems to be their favourite pastime. Stanley tries to be good, but there are so many enticements! He loves music, the contents of the refrigerator, and he wants to share his good fortune with his friends. Unbeknownst to him, his people come home one evening earlier than expected and Stanley is left to take responsibility for his actions

Bang, Molly

My Light

ISBN 043948961X

Were it not for the sun and its energy, where would we be? In the hands of a skilled artist and writer, electricity can be made worthy of further study, even for our youngest listeners. Molly Bang has created a gem of a book that helps students of science understand the concept of electric power and how it makes our present lives possible. She tells her story in the sun's voice, regaling readers with the wonders of our closest star. The illustrations are luminous and the afterword reflects how an interest can become an obsession, as she tries to pare down all that she has learned from her research.

 Bouchard, David**Voices from the Wild**

ISBN 0811814629

The premise for this wonderful book of poetry is uncommon to say the least. It involves the five senses, an artist, and a host of incredible animals. Each one, chosen for its spectacular sensory merits, vies for the artist's attention while trying to convince him that it deserves pride of place as the artist's model. The rhythm of the words is not lost on listeners who love to play the guessing game that evolves while sharing this lovely book. Always a hit at reading times, it will be well worn before you know it.

 Bowers, Vivien**That's Very Canadian**

ISBN 1897066058

What better way to share all that you know about your home country than to write a witty and inspired report on it! That's just what Rachel does in this fine book. From the loonie and twonie to Mounties and toques, she wants her readers to know all that she knows about Canada. Canadian symbols, both provincial and national, are here; as well as many of those other signs that make us uniquely Canadian. A great way to fill your students' heads with information about their homeland and its many facets.

 Busby, Peter**First to Fly**

ISBN 0439987946

A look at the Wright Brothers and their lifelong interest in flight, this book's oversized pages are filled with authentic photos, short essay boxes containing a myriad of information, and detail-enriched diagrams. A personal look at these quiet, determined brothers allows the reader a chance to see their struggles and triumphs as they learned the intricacies of flight, prior to building their first motorized flying machine. The back matter includes everything needed for further study. A brilliant combination of text and visuals...bravo!

Cole, Joanna

The Magic School Bus

ISBN 0590446878

Many readers have appreciated reading *The Magic School Bus at the Waterworks*, a book that exemplified quality nonfiction writing. Joanna Cole provides an enjoyable storyline with accurate and detailed research information, presented in a fresh and intriguing manner. This gives aspiring scientists a model for presentation rather than the traditional reporting format. Bravo! Cole has since written ten further books using the same design. Each is as useful and wonderful as the first. They cover such topics as the solar system, inside the earth, dinosaurs, oceans, electricity, beehives, hurricanes, the human body, and the senses.

Dahl, Roald

Danny, Champion of the World

ISBN 0141301147

Many educators love reading Roald Dahl books aloud. He has such a way with words and wacky characters. Danny is certainly a favourite Dahl book. This story of the love between a father and his son has fast-paced action, injustice, and daring and obstreperous villains. Danny is indeed a champion and the events that keep you turning the pages will leave your listeners begging for more.

DiCamillo, Kate

Because of Winn-Dixie

ISBN 0763616052

Oh, that we all could find a Winn-Dixie! When Opal India Buloni and her father move to small-town Florida, she is quietly in search of family and a sense of belonging. She goes into a grocery store for needed supplies and comes out with a scruffy, smiling dog that will alter the course of her life. It turns out that Winn-Dixie is looking for the same things as Opal. What DiCamillo has in store for her readers is an amazing and unforgettable cast of offbeat characters who bring an end to Opal's lonely existence and help her face the abandonment of her mother when she was just 3 years old.

 Ellis, Sarah**Several Lives of Orphan Jack**

ISBN 0888996187

Otherjack is an orphan whose greatest love is words and whose finest possession is an old, shabby dictionary. He is unhappy with his lot in life and when he is hired as a bookkeeper, he believes that all his dreams have come true. Thinking he will be the protector of books, his illusions are soon shattered and he determines that his path lies in being an idea man, a job seemingly perfect for him. Ellis' love of language and wordplay is evident throughout this engaging story of a young man who follows his heart and makes his own dreams come true.

Florian, Douglas

Omnibeasts

ISBN 0152050388

Fans of Doug Florian's humorous and quirky writing will look to this compilation as a chance to revisit some of their old favourites. Selected from seven previous books, each of which dealt with an order of the animal kingdom, these poems reflect the artistic charm and witty writing that make Florian a new favourite with the poetry crowd. His ability to focus on fun and his use of inspired wordplay will have you searching for all that he has written.

Gaiman, Neil **The Day I Swapped my Dad for Two Goldfish** ISBN 0060587032

Are there times when you would consider trading a member of your family? Dad seems to enjoy reading the paper and not much else; so, Mike decides to swap him for two goldfish. When repercussions from the incident are threatened, he is forced to go get Dad back. Oops! The friend has further swapped him and it takes a great deal of patience and persistence to finally find him. Mother insists that he never swap Dad again, but she doesn't say anything about his sister!

George, Christine O.

Fold me a Poem

ISBN 0152025014

A youthful artist, a pile of brilliantly coloured origami papers, and a lot of imagination set the stage for this exceptional book of poems, written in the tradition of haiku. George's signature poetry comprises pithy attention to the details of the subject being presented. Here she introduces us to a young child whose imagination soars while paper folding a world of play. Eloquently presented, it helps us see that there is much to be discovered when a young mind is allowed to wander free.

Hurst, Carol Otis

Rocks in his Head

ISBN 0060294035


A nostalgic memoir of a father who loved rocks and made rock collecting his passion throughout his lifetime will encourage readers to follow their dreams and make a life doing what they love to do. Filled with fine drawings that hearken us back to an earlier time, we know the joy that Hurst's Dad felt in gathering and displaying his many finds. Eventually the 'rocks in his pocket and rocks in his head' led to a new and fulfilling career.

Kerley, Barbara

The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins

ISBN 0439114942

Can you imagine a time when we had no idea what a dinosaur looked like? Well, such was Victorian England and lucky we are that a man gave his life to providing a realistic look at the monstrous creatures that continue to fascinate so many. Waterhouse Hawkins spent his life creating models and drawing images of dinosaurs. He even hosted a New Year's bash in his constructed model of an iguanodon. A picture book biography of distinction, this book is worth a good, long look.

 Major, Kevin**Eh? to Zed**

ISBN 0889952728

So, you want to know about Canada, eh? Here are some of our most treasured and familiar terms set in rhyming couplets and accompanied by varied, yet precise, images created in mixed media montages to aptly show those things that make us truly distinctive in the greater world. Filled with details and some obscurity, this alphabet book can be read by a younger audience but will be most appreciated by those who have some knowledge of Canadian history, geography, and culture. It begs to be revisited. The author's endnotes and the illustrator's notes provide perspective for the choices made.

Morrison, Gordon

Pond

ISBN 061810271X

A sketchbook in the best sense of the word, this lovely work invites the reader to participate in the life of a glacial pond throughout the four seasons. Told as a story, together with many watercolour illustrations and pencil drawings, it includes additional information at every turn. It begins in late winter and then bursts forth into early spring with the return of a host of creatures and plant life. Readers will be drawn to this fine book again and again as they appreciate the abundance of information presented about a unique habitat.

Palatini, Margie

Piggie Pie

ISBN 0395866189

The pigs that live at MacDonald's Farm are just too smart for their own britches. When Gritch the Witch comes searching for piggies to make a pie, they are quick to disguise themselves and, thus, save their little pork butts. Hilarity ensues as they dress up and confuse the wily witch who is hungry, horrid, and hateful. But, the piggies are too sharp for her and it isn't long until a tired and decrepit wolf's warning has Gritch looking elsewhere for a scrumptious morsel.

Polacco, Patricia

The Keeping Quilt

ISBN 0689844476

The traditions of Polacco's family are never more prevalent as they are in this wonderful story of the keeping quilt passed from one generation to another, beginning with the arrival of her great-grandmother from Russia in the late nineteenth century. The only colour in the telling comes from Great-Gramma Anna's bright babushka and dress. They are incorporated into the quilt that will endure through changes in fashion and custom; it remains the thread that links the family through good times and bad. Polacco's truly expressive characters add to the charm of this lovely family story.

Silverstein, Shel

Where the Sidewalk Ends

ISBN 0060572345

Many readers have taken great pleasure from reading the hilarious adventures of so many of Silverstein's weird and wacky characters. In fact, many readers are only too happy to recite *The Crocodile's Toothache*, *Lazy Jane*, *Spaghetti* and *Melinda Mae* to all who will listen, and at a moment's notice. If you can, find the cassette that accompanies this wonderful book and hear the poems in Silverstein's distinctive voice.

Spier, Peter**People**

ISBN 038524469X

Almost wordless, this incredibly detailed book remains popular twenty years after it was first published. In it, Spier provides a cornucopia of faces and forms from each continent. He is expert at showing the diversity that exists and helping each of us recognize the true community of spirit that resides within our differences. What a wonderful jumping-off point for children to discuss all that makes us unique and remarkable inhabitants of Earth.

🍁 Taylor, Joanne

There You Are

ISBN 0887766587

World War II is over and life is returning to normal for the thirteen families who live in the Margaree Valley of Cape Breton. Not so for Jeannie Shaw, a 12-year-old independent spirit, whose lonely life would be so much better if she had a real friend with whom to share it. No such person seems apparent. When hardship hits and her happy family life is threatened by near tragedy, Jeannie finds the friend she has been seeking in a most surprising place. Wonderfully drawn characters, an admirable setting, and moments that are carefully constructed make this fine novel worthy of thorough study.

🍁 Wallace, Mary

The Inuksuk Book

ISBN 1895688914

Mary Wallace consulted with Inuit elders and other experts before writing this exemplary book that introduces readers to the traditional stone structure used for centuries to ensure communication for the people of the North. Ten Inuksuk shapes are brought to life through archival photographs and exquisite silk paintings. Some provide direction while others point out good fishing spots or act as a memorial to an important person or event. Step by step instructions are provided for construction of your own Inuksuk. This is an excellent resource as an introduction to a worthy culture, or a harsh environment.

Weisner, David

Sector 7

ISBN 0395746566

A master of saying as little as possible when the story can be shown, Weisner again takes to the skies to bring 'readers' an imaginative and entertaining flight of fancy. One young participant in a class trip to the Empire State Building has never had it so good! When the building is enveloped in fog, he is whisked away to a cloud station in the upper atmosphere. What happens there will have kids laughing with delight and using their collective imaginations to make discoveries beyond their wildest dreams. This book is testament to the fact that the more you look, the more you see.

🍁 Wiebe, Rudy

Hidden Buffalo

ISBN 088995285X

Combining lush prairie landscapes and a traditional Cree tale, Rudy Wiebe and Michael Lonechild have created a story that is memorable and enlightening. They make evident the Cree belief that dreams can be a culminating event in preserving life for their people. Sky Running is watching for buffalo, despite their apparent disappearance. When he finds a buffalo shaped stone and keeps it by his side during sleep, he dreams a dream that leads his tribe to the land of plentiful buffalo, through the Badlands to the banks of the Red Deer River.

FLUENT

Ackerman, Diane

Animal Sense

ISBN 0375823840

A book of 15 compact and concise poems, *Animal Sense* is quietly funny while sharing a vault of information for the animals chosen. Three fresh and vivid poems for each sense expand our minds and inspire us to take a closer look at the focus animal. The imagery is indeed sensorial and soothing to our spirits. The pictures are complimentary and honour the animals through careful observation of each in its own habitat. Compare this to *Voices of the Wild* (Bouchard, 1996) for an interesting and useful way of presenting research notes.

🍁 Bogart, Jo Ellen

Emily Carr: At the Edge of the World ISBN 0887766404

I knew little about Emily Carr before I read this book. I would likely have recognized her work, but I would not have known the woman I came to know at the talented hands of Jo Ellen Bogart and Maxwell Newhouse. A biography that will gain the interest of anyone attracted to art and artists, Canadian history, and women's rights, Bogart does an admirable job of bringing this misunderstood artist to our attention. Despite many setbacks, Carr was able to realize many of her dreams through her art, and then her writing. She lived on the edge when living on the edge was a most uncomfortable place to be. And she succeeded!

🍁 Bouchard, David

The Song Within my Heart

ISBN 1551925591

The rhythmic beat of the drum and the chanting tone of the powwow are clear in this lyrical tribute to a man's grandmother, who taught him to listen to his own heart when trying to understand the music of this native celebration. Allen Sapp was largely influenced by the teachings of his grandmother while growing up on a Saskatchewan reservation. His beautifully vivid artwork bears testament to that. The lyric poetry honours his memories of Nokum and their life together.

Bunting, Eve

I am the Mummy Heb-Nefert

ISBN 0152024646

The power of this story comes from its first-person narrative voice, which gives it such presence and impact. Heb-Nefert describes herself as the pampered and beautiful daughter of an Egyptian monarch. When she meets the pharaoh's brother, they fall in love and she becomes a privileged wife. At death, her body is mummified...meant to retain her beauty for all eternity. Now she lies in a museum where people gawk all day long. She hears them speak and longs to tell them that she was once beautiful.

🍁 Cumyn, Alan

After Sylvia

ISBN 0888996462

Poor Owen Skye...he's the master of mishaps, the hapless hero of a previous story, and the determined pursuer of 'Sylvia' in this second chronicle of his life and times. We met Sylvia in *The Secret Life of Owen Skye*. Now, she has moved and Owen is finding that life without her just doesn't seem worth it. He is a boy in love...and a wonderful character to boot. Owen is funny, poignant, independent, and vulnerable. He lives his life with great gusto, but is haunted by thoughts that he might be forgetting his first love in the wake of her disappearance from his life. Will he ever see her again? What can he do to ensure her return?

DiCamillo, Kate

The Tale of Despereaux

ISBN 0763617229

This tale of longing, love, and forgiveness is flawless fare for reading aloud. The first three parts of the book introduce satisfying characters whose lives converge in the fourth and final part. In elegant language filled with subtle messages for her readers, DiCamillo has fashioned a story that reads like a fairy tale...with a romantic, big-eared mouse, a perfect princess, a dastardly rat, and a wistful servant girl. Each is an outcast, filled with dreams and the desire for better days. With DiCamillo's storytelling prowess, their lives intertwine and we are left with the promise of 'happily ever after'.

🍁 Edwards, Wallace

Monkey Business

ISBN 1553374622

With a definition to begin and a more complete explanation of idioms following the text, Wallace Edwards sets us up to learn more about the intricacies of the English language than we ever thought possible, by sharpening our powers of observation. While the text is useful, the illustrations tell their own story and will win new fans for this humorous, elegant artist. The pages are filled with details that will entice readers of all ages. Then, he encourages us to look again by asking, "Did you find the monkey on every page?" You need no more invitation than that to enjoy this book AGAIN.

🍁 Ellis, Deborah

The Breadwinner

ISBN 0888994168

This powerful story will make more real the deplorable and chilling conditions that have been a way of life for many of the world's women. Parvana, a young Afghan girl, lives with her family under the oppressive rule of the Taliban. When her father is imprisoned for unknown reasons, Parvana must support her family. She does so with tenacity and great dignity. The tension is palpable, the ending hopeful. When the reading is complete, reach for *Parvana's Journey*.

George, Kristine O.

Hummingbird Nest

ISBN 0152023259

What a gem! When a hummingbird took up residence in a tree on Kristine George's patio, she decided that she would keep a poetry journal to describe the tiny summer guest. In carefully chosen words, she eloquently describes the mother as she builds and protects her nest, lays her eggs, hatches them, and cares for the tiny babies prior to their initial flights. It is with heavy hearts that the family bids these tiny helicopters adieu when they decide to strike out on their own. A wealth of information about hummingbirds is shared following the author's note at the back of this remarkable book of poetry.

Hannigan, Katherine

Ida B

ISBN 0060730242

Ida B loves her life. She spends her days learning with her mother, talking to the orchard trees, and floating rafts with notes to any who find them. Her mind is alight with curiosity and the pleasure of her surroundings. Then, her mother is diagnosed with cancer and everything changes. Mama is too tired to teach and Daddy decides to sell a part of her beloved orchard. Ida B is devastated and her reaction is swift and clear. It takes time, understanding, and a new realization that life changes and marches on before Ida B is willing to make some concessions. What a wonderful character she is...spunky, full of wit and wisdom. You need this book!

Hesse, Karen**Out of the Dust**

ISBN 0590371258

Journal entries are dated over a period of two years, taking the reader through seasons that seem unchanging as the people wait for life-giving rain. While struggling with adversity and isolated by the grim reality of the Dust Bowl, Billie Jo remains a resilient female character who learns that, even altered beyond recognition, home is the best place in the world. Now, she can begin to forgive her father and herself for the sadness in their life.

🍁 Horvath, Polly

Everything on a Waffle

ISBN 0888994427

Primrose Squarp could be sad. Everyone believes her parents have been lost at sea. Not Primrose...she knows they are sitting on an island somewhere, just waiting to be rescued. Despite all the changes that affect her life and the resulting turmoil, she merrily plods on learning from each new experience and sharing it with us in her own unmatched way...she is stoic, resilient, curious, determined, and hilarious as she shares her take on the life she has been dealt. Along the way, she connects everything to food and provides a recipe for our enjoyment at the end of each chapter. You'll laugh out loud and then want to read it again.

Janeczko, Paul

That Sweet Diamond

ISBN 068980735X

I cannot imagine a clearer picture of THE summer game. Janeczko is so astute with descriptive language, fashioning provocative images of the many unique aspects of baseball. From fanatic fans to the always-confusing signals being thrown at players, both offensive and defensive, he shows us an often gentle and endearing portrait. This talented and prolific poet has created a commendable ode to summer's great game.

Johnson, Sylvia

Mapping the World

ISBN 0689818130

From clay tablets to computer imagery, this book traces the history of cartography in a way that makes it intrinsically interesting and enlightening for all readers. Maps have more to tell than how to get from one place to another. They give us a sense of the world at the time they were drawn. Clear, full-colour maps share space with well-structured, instructive writing. This book encourages thinking about the world as it has developed and the role that mapmakers have played throughout history. Budding cartographers might just get their start here...and try a first map of their own.

🍁 King, Thomas

Coyote Sings to the Moon

ISBN 1550139460

This wonderful story makes listeners laugh out loud and serves as an excellent example of a 'pourquoi' tale. When Old Woman and the animals come down to the pond to sing to the moon, Coyote asks if he might join them. They are reluctant, but allow him to do so. Moon is so disturbed by Coyote's voice that she leaves the sky. She cannot be coaxed into returning to her rightful place. When Old Woman forms a plan, she needs Coyote to help carry it out. He does his job TOO well!

Lehman, Barbara**The Red Book**

ISBN 0618428585

It is amazing what a talented and creative artist can say without saying a word! In this award-winning book we see the power of story through the eyes of two children. Each is looking at a red book, and both long for friendly contact. Only when the girl takes a dangerous chance do they meet...the red book has dropped from her hand, but we are left with the knowledge that it has not told its last story.

✻ Levine, Karen

Hana's Suitcase

ISBN 189676455X

Take a young Japanese teacher who wants to bring the story of the Holocaust to her students, add the suitcase of a young woman named Hana Brady, and combine it with the story that only one member of Hana's family lived to tell and you have this compelling true story to share with your students. Hana lived in Czechoslovakia prior to the Nazi invasion. First her mother, and then her father was taken by the Gestapo. In her suitcase are the artifacts of a changed life and her final deportation to Auschwitz. Fumiko's relentless quest to know Hana is chronicled here in alternate chapters told by brother and sister so that we all might know more about this horrifying time in history.

MacLachlan, Patricia

Painting the Wind

ISBN 0060297980

Summer is here. The painters have returned. The young boy welcomes these mentors he hopes will help him do what he has not yet done...paint the wind. It seems an impossible task. He has tried again and again. As he closely observes the visitors and considers each artist's technique (while noticing each one's equally exceptional dog), he gains confidence and knowledge. When his art hangs alongside the others at the summer's end show, he is finally able to feel great pride in his creative endeavours.

Morpurgo, Michael

Kensuke's Kingdom

ISBN 0439519813

When Michael and his dog, Stella, are washed overboard during a violent storm, their end seems imminent. As luck would have it, they wash up on the shore of an island that appears to have no human inhabitants. Wild gibbons, voracious insects, and overwhelming heat might mean the end for them. When food is left for them to find, Michael realizes they are not alone. It is not long until he meets Kensuke, a Japanese doctor who has lived a solitary life on the island since the Second World War. Improbable? Perhaps. Fantastic? Perhaps. Compelling? Entertaining? Memorable? Yes! Yes! and Yes!

Paulsen, Gary

Harris and Me

ISBN 0440409942

Oh, that Gary Paulsen! He is an industrious storyteller and uncompromising in his ability to create memorable stories that captivate his fans, old and new. He turns to humour in this tale of a city cousin dumped in the country home of Harris, an unrepentant nine-year-old who has already been in enough trouble to last a lifetime. Unsuspecting city kid that he is, our narrator has no idea what trouble means until he meets Harris and becomes trapped in his web of mischief and mayhem. Laugh out loud funny!

Pratt-Serafini, Kristin Joy**Salamander Rain**

ISBN 1584690178

Do you need a reason to investigate a pond or lake in your neighbourhood? If so, here's the perfect book to get you started. Kristin Pratt's infectious joy is evident in her lush, detailed journal entries in this small treasure and just right model for what you will find when you let your internal explorer free to roam and discover. She uses her cousin Klint's scrapbook as the impetus to create this well-received and honoured book for young researchers and other fascinated readers.

Rogers, Gregory

The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, the Bard

ISBN 1596430095

An errant soccer ball almost spells disaster for a young boy when it transports him back in time and plunks him on the stage of the Globe theatre. Shakespeare is not pleased and gives chase. The boy befriends a bear and they manage to elude the angry playwright while meeting other interesting Elizabethans. When they are finally rediscovered, the boy must make his escape. Back to the Globe, through the curtain, and he's home. Filled with action, resplendent in the backdrop of this era in history, and exhibiting a sophisticated use of perspective, Rogers creates a story for all ages.

Stevenson, James

Corn Chowder

ISBN 0060530596

No one writes clear observations as CLEARLY as James Stevenson. In this wonderful set of books he takes life's brief moments and breathes life into them for all to see and appreciate. *Corn Chowder* is the seventh and follows on the heels of *Popcorn*, *Candy Corn*, *Corn-Fed*, *Cornflakes*, *Sweet Corn* and *Just Around the Corner*. Each is brilliant in its use of perfect watercolour illustrations to extend the shaped and lively poems that deal with seemingly boring and familiar topics. He gives totally new perspective to the commonplace and helps us see our world with fresh eyes.

🍁 Turney-Zagwyn, Deborah

Long Nellie

ISBN 0902501990

What a character study this book offers! We first meet Long Nellie, a lonely outcast, as she collects firewood. Jeremy's mother describes her as a scavenger. She takes what others throw away. She seems perfect, then, to care for the scruffy, unruly cat that Jeremy finds hiding in a garbage can. Can he introduce the two? With a plan in mind, Jeremy is thrown into Long Nellie's company and finds her to be cheery and concerned. Jeremy learns a lesson about people while establishing a strong friendship with Nellie.

Van Allsburg, Chris

The Widow's Broom

ISBN 0395640512

Chris Van Allsburg is a master of irony. His stories are flawlessly told, and most end with a perfect twist. An old woman befriends an injured witch, who leaves her broom behind when she is, once again, well. Minna assumes the broom has no power, but it is soon helping with household chores. Upon discovery of the bewitched broom, her neighbours think it must harbour evil. It is seized and burned after a run-in with two bratty boys. Thinking the problem solved, the neighbours are distressed to hear that Minna has seen its ghost. Perfect!

PROFICIENT

🍁 Atwood, Margaret **Bashful Bob and Doleful Dorinda** ISBN 1552636097

Margaret Atwood provides more fun than a barrel of monkeys with her third alliterative tale. She fills the pages with sophisticated and amusing wordplay that requires a great deal of attention on the part of the reader to keep the tongue from being twisted beyond recognition. Their respective families have mistreated the heroes of this tale. They meet each other on a dreary day in December on a vacant block, littered with 'bushes, buttercups and benches'. They know they are meant to be friends. But by the end of the story the doleful and bashful parts of their personalities have vanished, to be replaced by daring and brave.

🍁 Batten, Jack **The Man who Ran Faster than Everyone** ISBN 0887765076

In the early twentieth century people loved long distance running. They didn't want to participate, but they were thrilled to watch and often thousands of people would attend a two-man race. The greatest distance runner of this time was Tom Longboat, an Onondaga from the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario. Tom was a family man, a good worker, but, most of all, he was a runner. He was honoured as an athlete, but constantly reminded of his place in the society of the time. Jack Batten is forthright in his writing about this incredible Canadian whose career exemplified the best of the best; he describes the challenges that Longboat met as an Aboriginal and gives us a clear and disturbing look at the social and economic prejudice he faced. This is a wonderful sports story about a truly remarkable Canadian hero.

Baylor, Byrd **The Table where Rich People Sit** ISBN 0689820089

Do you often think about how rich your life is? Of course, it depends on how we measure that wealth. Byrd Baylor has long lived a life blessed with the riches of nature's bounty. Her narrator, Mountain Girl, feels that her family is not rich enough; they sit at an old, homemade table and wear shabby clothes and shoes. Her parents hold to another belief about what makes people rich. They want to see the sky when they work...that is richness. They enjoy sunsets and long hikes into cool canyons near their home. In the end, it proves difficult to attach a price to those things that allow us to live a *rich* life.

🍁 Bouchard, David **The Journal of Etienne Mercier** ISBN 1551431289

Etienne Mercier is a Hudson's Bay Company employee when he is sent to establish contact with the Haida people of the Queen Charlotte Islands. It is his job to record his findings and so he keeps a journal. Filled with his observations of all that he is discovering, as well as the accompanying vivid pictures that he paints, he shows the reader what life is like for the people of the west coast in the mid nineteenth century. The language and beauty of the book will encourage readers to lend an ear to Canada's past. An accompanying CD with songs sung by the author adds to the experience. The design is impeccable and will provide much enjoyment for those wanting to know more about our history.

Cormier, Robert**Frenchtown Summer**

ISBN 0440228549

Both historical and autobiographical, this novel in verse tells of Eugene's thirteenth summer. Not unlike the summer of many boys his age, Eugene falls in love for the first time, gets his first job, and takes note of the people and events that are part of his Frenchtown community. He is also struggling to define his relationship with his father. Filled with evocative language and beautiful images, Cormier has created a special book that will be read and savoured by even the most reluctant among us.

🍁 Doyle, Brian

Mary Ann Alice

ISBN 0888995512

Mary Ann Alice is another of Brian Doyle's unforgettable characters. She is original, independent, and a budding geologist. Her love of rocks and fossils comes from her incomparable teacher, Patchy Drizzle, who says that she has the 'soul of a poet'. Progress is set to change the landscape of her community, and much will be lost when a dam is built on the Gatineau River. It will destroy the farms of many of her neighbours and the only way of life they have known. Doyle is expert at creating setting, superb characters, and a touching story that will remain with you for a very long time.

Fleischman, Paul

Seedfolks

ISBN 0064472078

It begins with Kim who plants six lima bean seeds in the hope that they will call up the spirit of her dead father. A neighbour watches as she plants them and when she discovers what they are, makes a plan to help keep them moist. As the sprouts poke through the ground, others in the multi-ethnic neighbourhood notice and try their hand at helping. The result is a community garden. This elegant story introduces us to 13 characters. Each of their voices is distinct; but each is part of the same story and has a hand in creating something beautiful from a rat-infested patch of land. A lesson that we learn along the way is that we can all work toward the same goal, despite our differences. Uplifting!

🍁 Galloway, Priscilla **Archers, Alchemists and 98 Other Medieval Jobs** ISBN 1550378104

If you would like to read a witty, but uncompromising book about the Middle Ages, pick this one. From a highly regarded and inquisitive author it gives you the real goods on the jobs that were available to all at this time in history. By sorting this book into ten chapters that deal with the variety of jobs to be had, Galloway informally discusses the many strange, but true, occupations that consumed their days and helped them make a meagre living. It is very interesting to note the expectations for many of the workers. One that comes to mind is the barber who not only cut off hair, but also the occasional infected thumb. YUCK!

 Heneghan, James**The Grave**


ISBN 0888994996

Many are compelled to sit and read this book from cover to cover. It is the gripping story of Tom, who has spent his life being shuffled from one foster home to another. While he investigates a gaping hole near his newest home, he falls back through time to Ireland and 1847, at the height of the potato famine. There he meets the Monaghans and learns what family is. He is curiously drawn to the family and their love for each other even in such hard times. He is uncannily like young Tully, the boy whose life he saves. There is reason for that which you are sure to discover when you read this fine book.

 Jacobson, Rick**Picasso**

ISBN 0887765998

To learn about art and artist in such a clear and simple way is a tribute to the skill of this husband and wife team. They introduce Picasso through a series of beautiful portraits, showing the artist as he worked, as he rested, and as he contemplated the world in which he lived. His art is a reflection of his life and the author is able to capture the periods of joy and sadness that were part of Picasso's inspiration. It might be the perfect book to encourage readers to find out more about this famous man and his impact on the art world.

 Leavitt, Martine**Heck, Superhero**

ISBN 0889953007

What is a 13-year-old to do? He's been evicted from his apartment, and his mother has disappeared. Just as the superheroes that he draws feel compelled to do good things for others, Heck hopes that his good deeds will help in his search to find his mother without anyone's help. He searches for three days while living in a car, longing for food, and harbouring an intense toothache. There are people who want to help, but Heck is independent and protective of his mother and her occasional bouts of depression. When he finally finds her, he also realizes that he is just a boy who needs help too. Heck is a great hero...compassionate, loyal, and oh, so likeable.

Napoli, Donna Jo

Albert

ISBN 0152052496

Every morning when Albert awakens, he makes a plan to go for a walk. As he listens at his window and holds his hand outside to check the weather, he hears good sounds...and then he hears bad sounds. So, he decides to stay inside. One morning a mother cardinal starts building a nest on his outstretched hand. Albert is trapped. He becomes a tree to the nest and the cardinal lays her eggs, hatches them, and watches them become fledglings before Albert can finally bring his hand back inside. In the meantime he has learned much about his neighbourhood. It seems Albert is also ready to spread his wings...and occasionally fly!

 Oppel, Kenneth**Silverwing**

ISBN 0006481795

Choosing to give life to a creature that humans often find loathsome and frightening, Oppel created Shade, a runty bat of the Silverwing colony. His adventures have had many on the edge of their seat and longing to read his story aloud to anyone who would listen. The pace is fast, the characters unforgettable, and the promise of future exploits kept with the release of the other books in the trilogy. Look for *Sunwing* and *Firewing* to satisfy your need to know more about Shade and his family. This is thrilling, nonstop action at its best and promises to be a series that will be read by future generations.



O'Reilly, Gillian

Slangalicious

ISBN 15503777647

Are you interested in words? This author surely is. Not wanting to use a dictionary format to reveal the discoveries she made when researching the origin of slang, O'Reilly decided to make it more appealing by including some of the history associated with the words she found. She designed a story that would tell what she had learned. A language assignment turns to fun when two computer characters help put it together. The design is impressive, the illustrations amusing, and sidebars ensure that any additional information is presented.

Paulsen, Gary

How Angel Peterson Got His Name

ISBN 0440229359

Every story in this hilarious collection will have you roaring with laughter. Paulsen chooses to tell 'extreme sport' stories from the summer of his 13th year when he and his friends were trying to prove something to the world. In the way of many 13-year-old boys, they were not averse to danger and most of the stunts ended in amusement while also being a bit scary. For the reader, this book is nonstop fun and destined to be on bestseller lists for years to come!

Peck, Richard

The Teacher's Funeral

ISBN 0803727364

When Richard Peck turned his attention to historical fiction, he did all of us a huge favour. He has created some of the best and most memorable characters in recent years. It is 1904 and Russell is due to begin school in rural Indiana when he hears that his teacher has died. It's the best news he's heard and it is his fervent hope that it will result in the school being shut down so that he might pursue his dream of riding the rails. Not going to happen...his older domineering sister is hired to take over the school and nothing deters her from bringing education to her six students. A superb readaloud that you would be remiss to miss!

Polacco, Patricia

Pink and Say

ISBN 0399226710

There are few picture books about the Civil War and none as dramatically stunning as this book about two young soldiers who meet when one is wounded. Pink returns home with Say in tow. Moe Moe Bay cares for him and brings him back to good health. When marauders kill Moe Moe, both young men feel the need to return to battle. They are soon captured and sent to Andersonville Prison...a death trap. Pink is hanged for his colour, and Say is left to pass their story from generation to generation. The artwork is brilliant and the story more powerful when it is revealed that Say is Polacco's great-great grandfather.

Rohmann, Eric

Time Flies

ISBN 0517885557

Time travel, scientific theory, an artist's interpretation, and dinosaurs...WOW! Rohmann has created a book that needs no words to tell its story. A bird flies into a dinosaur museum in a bid for protection from a summer storm. Unwittingly unconcerned as it flies, it is soon eaten by what looks to be a surviving Tyrannosaurus. The museum alters to become a landscape and the columns become trees. As the bird descends through its throat, the T-Rex transforms to the skeletal remains of itself. Inspired by the idea that birds might be the direct descendants of the dinosaurs, Rohmann has created an eerie world portrayed in captivating oil paintings.

Sis, Peter

Tibet: Through the Red Box

ISBN 0374375526

Peter Sis is a marvelous storyteller. In this personal account from his childhood, we learn about the red box that sat just out of reach in his father's study. When his father left it to Peter, he discovered its secrets. Inside was his father's diary, kept while he was lost in Tibet. He was only able to share unforgettable tales when he finally returned to his family. With his return, colour came back into Peter's world. In this book he shares his father's tales with us...as a legacy to his own son, Matej.

Spinelli, Jerry

Wringer

ISBN 006592826

Palmer is nine and reveling in being so. He has been accepted into the gang of bullies that constantly harass an old friend, he has a nickname, and he is feeling pretty good. He knows, though, that ten is coming and he dreads the town ritual that he will have him wringing the necks of wounded pigeons. The fact that he has befriended a pigeon and is trying to keep it secret adds to his dilemma. The pace is tight, the drama is tense, and the story is thought provoking. Spinelli uses the bird and Palmer's attempts to protect it as just the right touch of humour to give the reader a needed break from the intensity of this wonderful story.

 Taylor, C.J.**Peace Walker**

ISBN 0887765475

Listening to the elders tell stories of the Great Peace gave C. J. Taylor a starting point for this wonderful story of how Hiawatha, the great Onandaga chief, struggled to bring peace to his people. Hiawatha chose to work with Tekanawita of the Mohawk nation to bring a quiet end to the fighting incited by the tyrant Atotarho. Only Hiawatha was brave enough to stand up to him and seek peace and initiate the Iroquois Confederacy. While retelling this remarkable story, Taylor also shares realistic details of native life in historical context. Her art graces each chapter. This is a worthy addition to any collection of aboriginal literature.

Van Allsburg, Chris

The Mysteries of Harris Burdick

ISBN 0395353939

Who is Harris Burdick? Why did he leave his paintings to be found? What did he want to be done with them? What an imaginative and skillful way to get your audience involved. Van Allsburg presents fourteen drawings, each rendered in black and white, with only a title and a caption to accompany them. The reader is left to take a personal journey of discovery and imagination while trying to come to grips with the scene presented. A portfolio of the prints has been made available...you need it!

Wick, Walter**A Drop of Water**

ISBN 05900221973

Wick's abiding interest in old science books for children led him to try some experiments having to do with amazing discoveries. When he brought his camera to the task, he added an incredible new dimension to these findings. Through brilliant, stop action photographs he shows us the many facets of water...evaporation, condensation, snowflakes, and even some special magical tricks. He adds some experiments for readers to try...if they can be enticed to leave the elegant, captioned photographs.

Williams, Vera

Amber was Brave, Essie was Smart

ISBN 0060571829

Through poems and pictures Vera Williams introduces Amber and Essie, two loving sisters whose life will make you laugh, and then cry. Their love for each other is evident in the tiny glimpses we get at the life they lead together. Their mother works long hours for little pay, their father is incarcerated for larceny, and food is scarce. But, there is much love, laughter, and the occasional ritual to keep them upbeat and looking forward. The illustrations complement and give life to the poetic vignettes intended to bring to our attention two fine and spirited, young girls.

Wright-Frierson, Virginia

A Desert Scrapbook

ISBN 0689806787

The practised hand of this meticulous artist brings the life of the Sonoran Desert right to our prairie doorsteps. As she did with *An Island Scrapbook* and then again with *A North American Rain Forest Scrapbook*, Wright-Frierson uses her astute hand and her sharp-eyed attention to the flora and fauna of the chosen habitat. The design is intriguing, and the text is informative and chatty. There is much to see in this intense study of a unique environment. It serves again as a marvelous example of how information can be presented in a highly personal way.

INDEPENDENT

🍁 Book, Rick

Necking With Louise

ISBN 0889951942

In seven short connected memoirs, we come to know and value Eric as a young man growing up on the Canadian prairies in the mid-1960s. He is a farm boy and he is experiencing all the torment of dealing with life as it is dealt. He has his first date with a friend who has become more than that, he experiences his first kiss and break-up, his hockey team goes to the championship game, and, finally, his beloved grandfather dies. The stories are so personal and genuine that you cannot help but wonder if they are autobiographical. As appealing to an adult audience who will remember 'the day' as it will be to its targeted audience, this is a book to be savoured.

🍁 Boyd, David

Looking For a Hero

ISBN 0921156421

An intense and well-constructed story, it holds readers from the opening lines. It is a twisting, turning murder mystery whose solution is not known until the final file is read. Nicholas is accused of killing Robert Player. Player was a hero to Nicholas' brother, Christian. Through a series of taped conversations, reports, and letters Nicholas becomes real to the reader, and we also become acquainted with the people in his life. In a string of associated stories, we learn the awful truth that led to Nick's arrest. We end with the question: is there a hero?

🍁 Brooks, Martha

Confessions of A Heartless Girl

ISBN 08889994761

Noreen storms into town on the edge of a meteorological storm and creates unsettled conditions for everyone she meets. She is on the run, and finds herself in a rundown café in small town, Manitoba. While we come to know Noreen intimately, we also cross paths with some of the other wonderful characters that people the town. Brooks is adept at making us feel at home in the setting and with her finely wrought characters. We have a stake in everything that happens to them and we smile a little brighter knowing that love can transform lives and build bridges to the future.

🍁 Carroll, Lewis

Jabberwocky

ISBN 1553370791

This very old poem has been made new again with the distinctive and unusual interpretation of this fine artist. While other versions have tended to interpret the fun of Carroll's wordplay, Jorisch takes a different perspective. He creates a world that is more about politics and war. The stark figures and colour choice project the violence that stands at the heart of his work. Older students will want to discuss its themes and the puzzles that he leaves unsolved. First in a new series of poetry called *Visions in Poetry*, this only fuels the fire and whets the whistle for the next one.

Cormier, Robert**The Rag and Bone Shop**

ISBN 0440229715


This is Robert Cormier's final novel and proof positive that he had no intention of turning away from the tough topics he chose for his young adult audience. Jason is twelve, quiet, and shy. When a friend's sister is murdered, Jason is quick to report that he was last to see her alive. Needing a quick resolution to the shocking crime, the police enlist the help of a skilled and unrelenting interrogator. In a small, hot, windowless room he plies his trade and elicits a confession from Jason. Sad and suspenseful, this story's shocking ending will leave readers stunned.

Dublin, Anne

Bobbie Rosenfeld

ISBN 1896764827

Thank goodness there are writers like Anne Dublin who link us to Canadian heroes of the past. This book allows readers a glimpse into Bobbie Rosenfeld's inner feelings. An accomplished athlete, a successful insurance salesperson, and a long-time sports writer, she made a name for herself in every walk of life. At a time when women were considered fragile and often inferior, she forged a path for those who would follow. Her sense of fair play and team spirit were not only important on the track, but played an essential role in all aspects of her life. The writing is relaxed and the reader feels most thankful to be sharing so much of Bobbie's life.

 Foon, Dennis**The Dirt Eaters**

ISBN 1550378066

For those who are not usually fans of science fiction/fantasy, the first two books in Dennis Foon's acclaimed *Longlight Legacy* might just offer a mind shift. In this first book we meet Roan who lives in Longlight, a society created by his great-grandfather. The gentle peace of his existence has been destroyed by war, leaving waste and devastation. Roan is taken in by The Brothers and learns that he has the skills to be a fine warrior. His first mission is abhorrent to him and he flees. Survivors can exist in this apocalyptic world, but it will be people who have the resilience and goodness of Roan that will ultimately give them hope for their future.

Gavin, Jamila

Coram Boy

ISBN 0374413746

Abundant description of England in the 18th century and the rogues who preyed on poor families, promising to take their babies and young children to people who would care for them, this is historical fiction that will appeal to young men when other such stories don't seem to do that. Meshak is the pivotal character, as all other main characters know him. It is a story of parallels, inspiring and unsavoury people, fascinating history, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil. It encompasses love, kindness, hate, and greed. It will remain in your memory always.

🍁 Haworth-Attard, Barbara **Theories of Relativity** ISBN 0006392997

Dylan is a self-described ‘throwaway’ child. What that means is that his mother threw him out when it looked like he might infringe on her chance to meet a reliable and prosperous man to be her new husband. He has not been on the streets long, but he has seen enough to make him suspicious and cautious. He enjoys visits with Jenna, but he notices that she is already falling prey to Brendan, self-appointed guardian of the kids who people his streets. Dylan makes a break by returning to his grandparents’ home where he was once happy, only to find his grandfather dying in a nursing home. It seems he has run out of options, but he learns there are good people and they can offer a glimmer of better things to come.

🍁 Holeman, Linda **Search of the Moon King’s Daughter** ISBN 0887766099

This is breathtaking historical fiction. Holeman proves her mettle with superb character development and a plot filled with twists and turns, despair and faith. While she has us embroiled in the events that shape Emmaline’s life, she also seamlessly weaves the brutal conditions of nineteenth century England into her story. We are transported back to walk alongside Emmaline as she deals with the hand she has been dealt; she does it with courage, selflessness, and hope. This is a most remarkable book that begs to be read aloud and savoured.

Johnson, Angela **The First Part Last** ISBN 0689849230

Chapters move back and forth from ‘then’ to ‘now’. Then is the time when Bobby was with Nia and they were awaiting the birth of Feather. Now is the time of Bobby’s struggle to be a single parent to his little girl. What lies between is the challenge for young people to make the right decisions when faced with the emotional impact of teen pregnancy. The plan to have the baby adopted seems right; then, tragedy strikes. What results is this amazing book whose focus is the young father. Don’t forget to read *Heaven*, the prequel to this fine read and our first introduction to Bobby. This is heartbreaking, yet uplifting fare.

🍁 Kennedy, Michael **Words On Ice** ISBN 1552632032

Even in Canada books about baseball outnumber hockey books more than two to one. However, with the arrival of each new hockey season there is a glut on the market of books about our national sport. As with all literature, some are commercial, some are marginal, and some are worthy of purchase and discussion. This worthy anthology is edited by Kennedy and contains some very famous names as creators of the stories collected...Richler, Gzowski, Callaghan, and Carrier. The stories are varied and give voice to one of our most revered traditions.



McNamee, Graham

Acceleration

ISBN 0440238366

We quickly learn that Duncan harbours some guilt for the failed rescue of a drowning victim in the previous summer. This year he is working in the Toronto subway system, in the lost and found department. When they are not busy, Duncan finds time to check out the items that cover the shelves. One is a leather book, which proves to be the diary of a sadistic man who tortures animals and stalks women. When Duncan cannot get police attention, he determines that he might ultimately become the saviour he missed being last year. What a ride... guaranteed edge-of-the-seat tension and spellbound interest through to the end!

Morpurgo, Michael

Private Peaceful

ISBN 0007150075

Thomas loves his big brother. So, when the British Army takes Charlie into service, Thomas enlists (at age 15) and follows him to the front. His desire to prove himself overrides his fear and any common sense. The horrors he sees, the social bigotry he faces in the trenches, and the abusive behaviours of officers all serve to show him that in war there is no glory. As he waits through this long night, Thomas tries to think of anything but what he must face in the morning. He reflects on his childhood with Charlie and his family. The shocking ending explains his introspective personal remembrances. The story is based on authentic interviews and battlefield visits.



Murray, Joan

Lawren Harris

ISBN 1552977633

The high quality of the reproductions and the straightforward text will make this a book that will appeal to those interested in the history of Canada and its artists. The size of the reproductions makes it easier for the reader to actually see the artist's style and technique and appreciate the clarity of the work. The text provides a close look at the influences of his surroundings on his life's work and gives readers a historical look at the time in which Harris worked. The chronology that follows shares a glimpse of the seasons, places, and people as he experienced them.

Nye, Naomi Shihab

19 Varieties of Gazelle

ISBN 0060504048

In sharing the joys and sorrows of her people, Naomi Nye also celebrates her heritage in hopes that, through mutual understanding and acceptance, we will eventually achieve peace. This collection has many previously published poems, but there are also new ones to be appreciated and that will hold the interest of the adolescent reader. Using her senses and her heart, as poets do, she treats us to the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of the Middle East. The Arab culture is rich in tradition and history, but is also an area of great instability. Through these heartfelt poems Nye helps us understand it in a clearer way.



Pavanel, Jane

The Sex Book

ISBN 189422230X

An A to Z format and a clear, candid approach to ALL sexual subjects make this excellent resource essential for both sexes. The graphics are terrific; the 'sex symbol' boxes are gender-specific. Any questions? They are all answered here. Any needed information is accurate and easy to find and to understand. Symptoms, treatment, and avoidance of STIs are the focus of much space and great importance. This is an indispensable book that will help everyone better understand sexual matters.

Ross, Val

The Road to There

ISBN 0887766218

History has long harboured mapmakers and we have all seen the results of the meticulous work that was their job. No one has ever told their stories in such a relaxed and effective way. This wonderful resource reads more like a novel than an academic guide to some of the finest mapmakers the world has known. Ross packs her thirteen chapters with telling details and gripping descriptions of these talented and hardworking scholars. Maps may tell stories, but so does this accomplished and acclaimed author. Fascinating reading!

✻ Sheppard, Mary C.

Seven For A Secret

ISBN 0888994389

Three fifteen-year-old cousins, summer in Newfoundland, a cove where trouble seems to dog its every citizen, and you've got a story. Kate, Rebecca and Melinda have been inseparable for years. Each summer brings them together and this one is no different...or is it? It could be depressing, but it isn't. That is due to the spirit with which the story is told, as a testament to the strength and resolve of those who live on 'The Rock' and take in their stride what life gives them, without complaint. The ending is hopeful and the story is endlessly absorbing.

✻ Stinson, Kathy

Becoming Ruby

ISBN 0143012894

Nan is on the cusp of being an independent and capable young woman. She is searching for her place and herself. She no longer wants to be called Nan so she will become Ruby, the name given by her grandmother, the only person who seems to know Ruby and her struggles. While trying to come to terms with the relationship that binds her mother and grandmother, Ruby also begins to deal with her own bond with her mother. As she wallows in the muddled waters of boyfriends, a growing need for freedom, and her mother's constant interference, she begins to make sense of the interactions. It is a transformative year, but Ruby triumphs and is on her way to becoming RUBY.

✻ Stratton, Allan

Chanda's Secrets

ISBN 1550378341

Chanda has lived through good times with her family on an African farm, but her father is dead and she is now living with her third stepfather. The most evident thing about her life is that it has changed. Her world is filled with illness and death, but AIDS is never mentioned. Then, one day, her mother disappears and Chanda begins to suspect that she has been stricken with the deadly illness. What about Chanda? Knowledge and learning help her face the situation and she encourages her mother to come home to die. She also makes arrangements to have her family tested. Telling this story in first person narrative makes it more personal and compelling. The telling is not maudlin or explicit, but it is heartbreaking. The setting is wretchedly authentic and the message that overcoming ignorance is the solution is always evident.

 Toten, Teresa**The Game**

ISBN 0889952329

Dani is in treatment for alcohol abuse and attempted suicide: her rehab allows her to talk about the game that she plays with her sister, Kelly. In taut, realistic writing we come to know Dani as she struggles to come to grips with all that is happening to her. She faces isolation and begins to sift through the hazy memories that flood her consciousness. When we realize what has led to this place and time, we know her demons. The story is heart wrenching and told with vigour. You will not soon forget the people you meet in these pages.

Whipple, Laura

If The Shoe Fits

ISBN 0689840705

Thirty-three poems retell the Cinderella story in a discerning, yet fresh, manner. We begin with Cinderella, an older, more pensive woman, who lives with her memories and ponders that magical night. Before Cinderella has the final say, EVERY other character also has a chance to share perspective, while expressing widely differing points of view. So many questions you might not have considered and here we have their answers. Wittily told, these poems will give you pause to stop and think of other stories whose characters might have had something important to say.

 Wilson, Budge**Fractures**

ISBN 0143312014

It is quite challenging to write short stories. They are so complex and are told in a few short pages, leaving the reader to ponder the 'befores' and 'afters'. Yet, here are twelve inspired short stories by a single author and they follow on the heels of a list of previously published collections. If you have not read Budge Wilson's work, be sure that you do! She has a wonderful way with characters, voice, and style. She tells us before we begin that a fracture is not a break. It might just be a crack, and a small one. Each of these masterfully told tales is of fractured families. The fractures vary in severity, and they have an important premise...to be human is to be flawed.

Woodson, Jacqueline

If You Come Softly

ISBN 0698118626

Few books leave readers sobbing. This is one; and *The Devil's Arithmetic* (Yolen, 1990) may have that effect. Ellie (aka Elisha, white Jewish girl) and Miah (aka Jeremiah, black Christian boy) meet, fall in love, and then must face the hostility of society at a time when racial mixing was taboo and people were not averse to making their opinions about it known to others. A love like theirs is not common and families must try to deal with the fallout. Told poignantly in alternating voices, we come to harbour hope for a future filled with love and peace. That is not to be...
